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# PRIVATE EYE

ELECTION 2005

## ***THEY'RE OFF!***

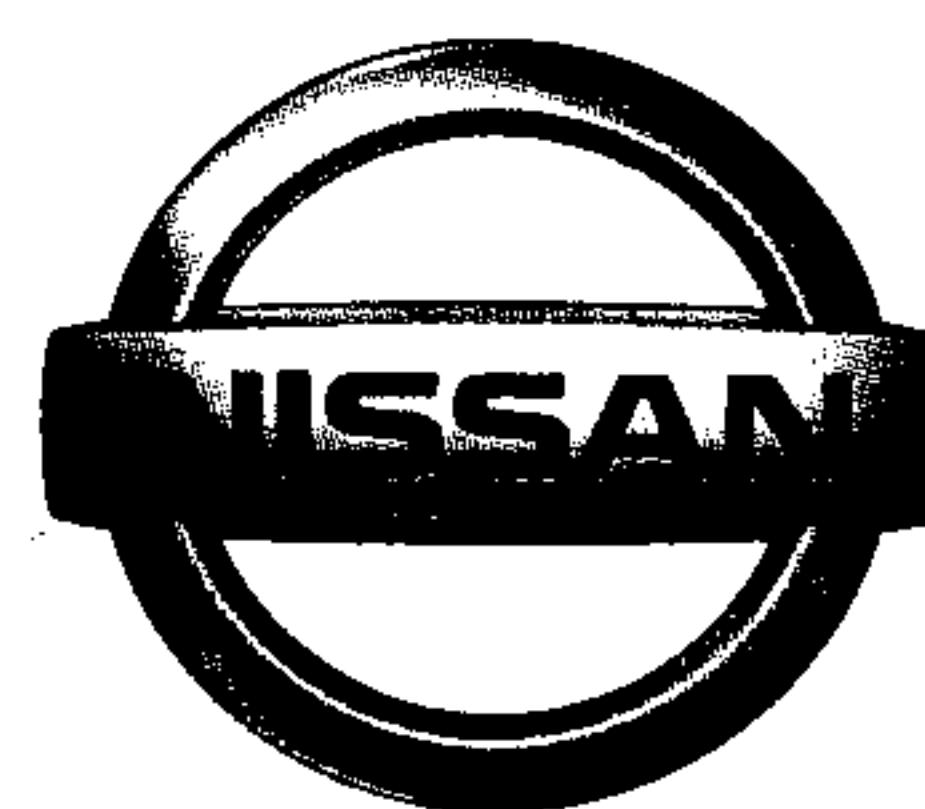


May the best  
man win!

Gordon?



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# Gnome press gazette

## UK PISSED AWARDS IN FULL

Presented by **Andrew Barr** with  
Special Guest **Sir Bob Boodeoff**

**Drunkest Journalist of the Year**  
**Phil Glass**  
(The Daily Moron)

**Drunkest Reporter of the Year**  
**Sam Again**  
(The Scum)

**Drunkest Columnist of the Year**  
**Hughie Vomit**  
(The Daily Excess)

**Most Drunk Newspaper of the Year**  
**Booze of the World**

**Most Hypocritical Newspaper of the Year for**  
Printing Articles about Binge Drinking, anti-  
social behaviour, Decline in Standards in  
Public Life etc, etc  
**All of the above**

(That's enough awards, Ed.)



"DG bites man - now that's news!"

## Back-up boobies take to the beat

West Cumbrian Gazette

### EDITORIAL

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**WHY** has John Prescott, aka the "Mouth of the Humber", been so silent in recent days?

Though he briefly exploded into life standing in for his boss at prime minister's questions, "JP" as he is fondly known in the parliamentary party has been wandering around with an even bigger scowl than usual. Might it have something to do with m'learned friends' investigations into widespread vote fraud in Labour-controlled Birmingham, and the fact that similar claims of electoral malpractice have now spread to Hull, represented by one John Prescott?

In Hull the Lib Dems, Tories and a group of Independents complained of widespread irregularities in last year's council elections. Since then an election has been rerun in one ward.

Which minister changed the legislation regarding postal voting? And who was warned even before he did so that the system would be wide open to fraud? No wonder "JP" is looking glum.

The special election court is due to reach its conclusions on the day Tony Blair is expected to call the general election. The presiding judge, Richard Mawsey QC, has already said he may be asked to conclude that voter fraud in Birmingham was widespread and not confined to the Aston and Bordsley Green wards, where six Asian Labour councillors are accused of vote theft and tampering.

Under the new legislation it is possible to turn up on election day with postal votes, as happened in Birmingham with carrier bags appearing, stuffed with votes. It has also been claimed that Labour supporters placed dummy ballot boxes in some areas.

**CONSTITUENTS** of government ministers often feel they get a raw deal. Their MP has little time for local campaigns and must avoid appearing to put the local vote before the interests of government departments or the nation.

Happily for the residents of Streatham, such matters do not seem to worry their MP, Keith Hill, who has just thrown his weight behind a plan to stop a giant mobile phone mast being built near a popular park. Mr Hill has written to Lambeth council's planning department saying he opposes the placing of the mast and asking to be included in all further correspondence on the matter.

Mr Hill is minister for, er, planning.

Campaigners against dozens of other masts around the country are somewhat surprised by Mr Hill's volte-face on the issue of mast siting. He has been a staunch defender of his department's unwillingness to change planning law so that all new telecom masts need proper planning permission.

## JUST FANCY THAT!

"The problem it was desired to solve was that of providing a good variety of two-course dinners, which should be practical as regards their preparation and serving, should be up to a certain standard as regards the proportion of protein and fat, would cost between 1d. and 1½d. for the material used and would be enjoyed by the children."

— City of Bradford Education Committee Report,  
'Course of Meals given to Necessitous Children' 1907.

## April Foolishness

- Let's talk Bolland: Hackwatch 5
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**LISTENERS** to the *Today* programme may have noticed how regularly the programme gets in a reference to "the latest YouGov poll".

BBC political staff have certainly noticed, and they fear that when the election campaign starts the presenters will have even more opportunities to mention the online polling firm, which was founded five years ago by two former aides to Jeffrey Archer.

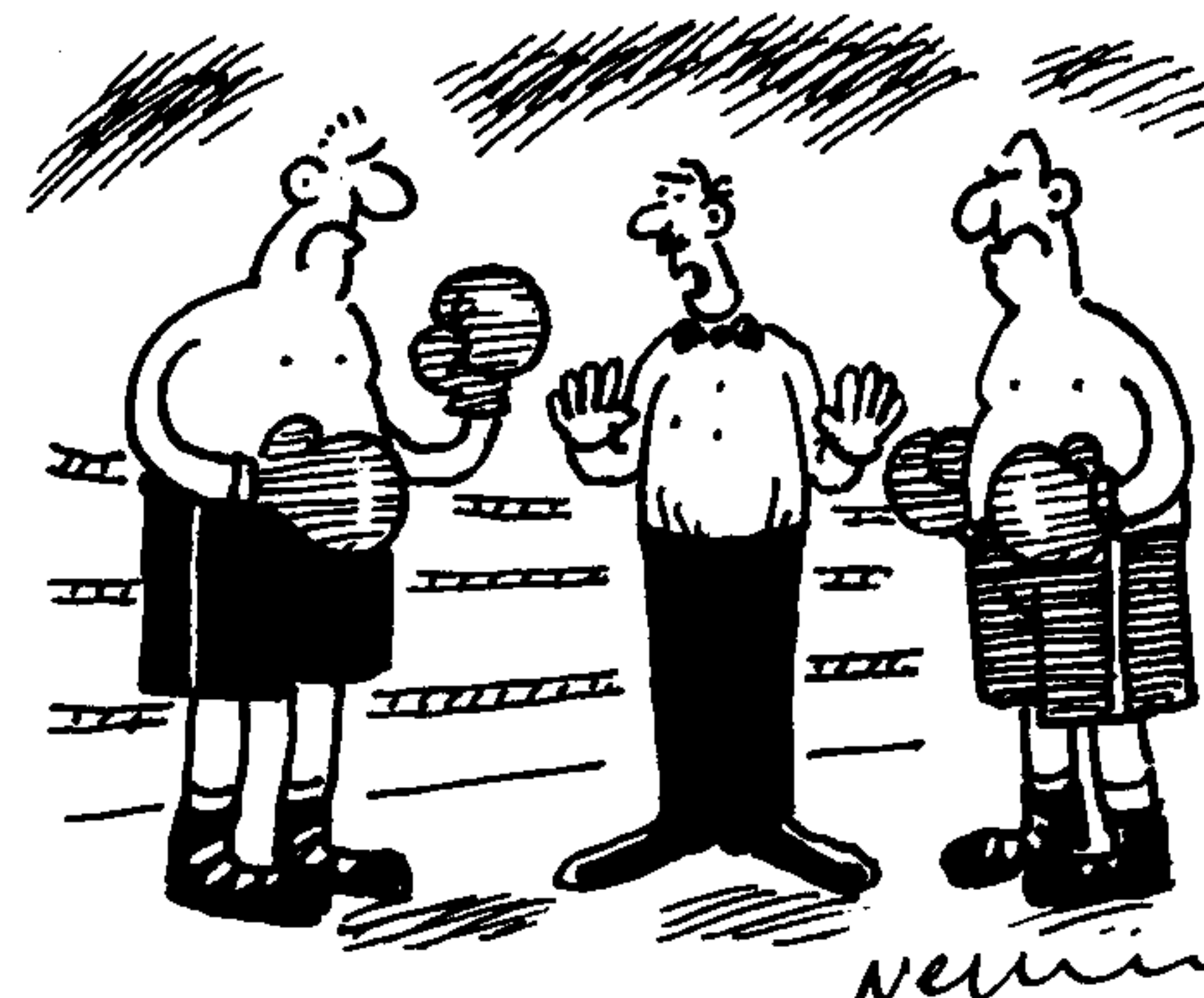
"The last thing we need now is another BBC scandal," says one despairing hack. "But it looks as if we're going to get one."

The problem is that regular anchorman John Humphrys has a strong personal interest in publicising YouGov, which is preparing for a stock-market flotation on AIM this summer. Not only does he write a weekly column for the YouGov website, but records at Companies House confirm that he also owns 200,000 shares in the company. Following the flotation, his stake could be worth more than £250,000.

**DIRECTOR-GENERAL** Mark "The Werewolf" Thompson has, via a BBC spokesman, admitted biting a colleague ("a bit of horseplay that backfired"), but has formally denied that on another occasion he throttled a picture editor at the BBC.

BBC staff are convinced by this denial, since the supposed frenzied encounter between Thompson and a colleague could not possibly have happened on the alleged night, 11 July 1989 – there was no full moon.

- crunching
- 0 ■ Number of pictures of Tony Blair on cover of forthcoming Labour election manifesto
  - 0 ■ Number of pictures of Tony Blair on welcome pages of Labour party website
  - 2 ■ Number of pictures of Gordon Brown on welcome pages of Labour party website



"No biting, no spitting, no inflammatory poster campaigns"

# Street OF Shame

**THE** British Press Awards, held on 15 March, featured winners calling their defeated rivals "twats", "knobs" and "arseholes", drunken heckling, choruses of booing, a stand-up row between Bob Geldof and *Mirror* editor Richard Wallace and the decision by no fewer than 11 newspaper editors to withdraw their support from the annual event in future because of the "decline in conduct and prestige".

In other words, as ex-*Observer* editor and chair of the judges Donald Treford put it in his introduction to the event's programme: "The British Press Awards show our newspapers at their finest, and make us proud of our trade."

**MUCH** boasting in the *Grauniad* last week as its hack Ian Griffiths was named business journalist of the year in the British Press Awards for his "special investigation into car manufacturer MG Rover". The judges praised Griffiths as a brilliant "story-getter".

The scoop in question, describing how the four men who bought MG Rover for £10 had "raked in millions" while the stricken car company edged ever closer to oblivion, appeared on the *Grauniad*'s front page last February.

A good story, no doubt, but hardly a "special investigation". The same revelations about the MG Rover fatcats appeared in a series of pieces by *Daily Telegraph* business correspondent Christopher Hope – a mere three months earlier.

**DEFENDING** his boss Michael Howard against charges of prejudice over his pronouncements on travellers, prospective Tory candidate and *Times* columnist Michael Gove outlined some of his own experiences in Surrey Heath, the constituency he hopes to call his own come May.

"In Chobham, a recent planning inquiry was told, a traveller admitted that he was carrying on commercial activity without paying any tax. I, and others, called for the police, Inland Revenue and Customs and Excise to investigate."

Since the point of his piece was that "there is nothing morally elevated about extending special treatment to one group at the expense of others", Gove has presumably also tipped off the authorities about the activities of his other boss, Rupert Murdoch, who relocated the *Times*' parent company News Corporation to the US last autumn to avoid paying half a billion pounds worth of tax in Australia (he already pays a minimal amount in the UK).

By an astonishing coincidence, the day after Gove's column appeared the *Australian Financial Review* revealed that Murdoch had also moved the stock listing of Kayarem, his privately-owned family trust, to the tax haven of Bermuda, saving him and his children a nifty £500m or more that would otherwise have gone to the taxman.

Gove should do his moral duty and get on the blower to the police immediately...

**HIGHLIGHTING** the plight of football referees who have quit the game after intimidation from players, managers and spectators, the *Sunday Times* cites the case of Urs Meier: "The Swiss official who disallowed a goal by Sol Campbell, sending England out of the Euro 2004 tournament, had to receive police protection after a tabloid newspaper published his contact details, triggering a flood of abuse from fans."

A tabloid newspaper, eh? Why so coy about its identity? Surely not because the offending rag was its News International stablemate the *Sun*.

**WHY** was celeb bible *Heat* so coy about the furore over Kylie Minogue's corset which gave the singer a supposed 16-inch waist?

The magazine, which is normally filled with endless follow-ups on the previous week's tabloid scoops, printed nothing at all about the garment.

Could this have been in any way related to its breathless scoop of 15 March, two days before the corset became Fleet Street's only topic of conversation? "Kylie Minogue has set the rumour mill in motion once again, by stepping out looking plumper than normal around her usually diminutive middle," the magazine drivelled. "Kylie refuses to confirm rumours of a pregnancy, but the star has been keeping a much lower profile of late."

Perhaps, however, the constricted tot will still emerge at some point in the future – and become a playmate for Madonna's third child which has (if the magazine is to be believed) been in gestation since roughly the summer of 2003.



"He's a cool customer. I'll give him that"

**WHO SAYS** Paul Dacre doesn't have a sense of humour? The *Daily Mail* editor recently asked his diarist Richard Kay to interview Charlie Methven, who was made redundant in the cull at the *Daily Telegraph*, with a view to hiring him as his deputy.

Until his departure, the Brylcreemed Old Etonian Methven had used his role as editor of the *Telegraph*'s Spy column to launch regular, scathing attacks on the *Mail*'s "resident rumour-monger", accusing him, among other things, of making up a story about Stella McCartney. He even managed to shame Kay into dropping his regular sign-off "Pip pip!" (nicknamed from the *Eye*) by ridiculing it as "Pip pap!"

Kay dutifully agreed to put old enmities to one side and meet Methven but, perhaps unsurprisingly, their encounter was not a great success. Methven told friends afterwards that he found Kay "a bit chippy". Fancy!

**BRUCE** "Brute" Anderson recently penned a flattering if somewhat barmy book review in the *Spectator*. The book in question, *The New English Kitchen* by *Spectator* cook Rose Prince, got high praise from the Brute – but then the review went off at a peculiar tangent.

The Orcadian piss-pot spent paragraph after paragraph praising Lord Salisbury (aka Lord Cranborne) and his pig-breeding enterprise.

Why so? Because over the new year Anderson gatecrashed a Salisbury family holiday in Italy and infuriated them so much with his boorish drunken behaviour that he was barred from the house. Despite much banging on doors and several pleading phone-calls, the resolute Salisburys refused to let the odious Brute back in.

Anderson is running short of grandees whose hospitality he can abuse: only a few months ago the *Eye* revealed a hideous incident which earned him a lifetime ban from Lord Hesketh's house in Northamptonshire. Will shameless brown-nosing in the *Spectator* get him back on the Salisbury guest-list?

**AFTER** his performances in the *Sweeney Investigates* series on BBC2, foghorn-voiced hack John Sweeney expected to be mobbed by fans wherever he went.

Not so, alas. On a recent bar-crawl with two of his "undercover moles" and producer Callum Macrae, Sweeney complained at wearisome length that no one ever recognises him in the street, even when he's clad in the dirty-old-man mac that he insisted on wearing for the TV series. So when he disappeared to make a phone call, one of the moles recruited a gorgeous pouting lady at the next table to assist with a cruel practical joke. On his return she accosted the hack and asked if he was the John Sweeney.

Sweeney, a serial victim of unrequited love, grew increasingly enraptured as the doe-eyed beauty professed her admiration for his journalistic talents. Alas, after a couple of minutes Macrae exposed the plot. "You've fucking kippered me!" the distraught victim wailed.

Sweeney is now bent on revenge and has discovered that Macrae is working in the same editing suite as Guy Ritchie, whose wife Madonna was doorstepped in the recent *Sweeney Investigates* exposé of her Kabbalah cult – which Macrae produced. Stand by for smoking barrels...

**ALTHOUGH** Adam Helliker's diary in the *Sunday Express* is subtitled "The man who knows the people you'd like to know", readers are likely to have been bemused to read a piece in his 13 March column about the little-known journalist Caroline Graham.

"The rush to cash in on the royal wedding has begun with the reissue of a biography of Camilla Parker Bowles by an opportunistic California-based tabloid correspondent," wrote Helliker, who went on to accuse "the blowsy authoress" of never having met the Prince of Wales's future wife or "indeed anyone who knows her".

But Helliker, who has failed to find a publisher for his own biography of Camilla, somehow omitted to mention that although Graham is indeed based in America she has nevertheless produced some royal scoops. Last year, for example, she revealed in the *Mail on Sunday* how Princess Diana's private address book, "packed with the names of some of the most powerful and influential people in the world", had ended up "in the hands of a shadowy private collector".

Her investigations also discovered that the book was sold for £25,000 to a Los Angeles broker in royal memorabilia by none other than Adam Helliker – who at the time was the diarist on the *Mail on Sunday*.

Helliker, who forged a letter from his former girlfriend in order for the sale to go ahead, was subsequently sacked for gross misconduct.

**"JACKO'S TEEN PORN STASH"** shrieked the front page of the *Sun* last Thursday, over the news that the singer's trial had been shown a selection of pornographic magazines which had been seized from his home.

It was not until 24 paragraphs into the story that the paper bothered to point out that "none of the images found were of under-age children – and all were legal." In other words the "teens" in question were 18 – as is Wayne Rooney's girlfriend Coleen McLoughlin who was pictured in a bikini directly beside the Jackson story, beneath the headline "Roo, what a scorcher!"

Just in case those editor Rebekah Wade likes to call "pervs" felt left out, she also provided them with a treat of a kind not found in Jackson's bedroom – page 5 of the same day's paper was almost entirely filled with a picture of three under-age couples engaged in what used to be called "heavy petting", one of the girls proudly displaying her knickers, to illustrate the paper's "Generation Sex Teen Survey Shock".



**LESS** than a month after collecting a £60,000 pay-off from the *Daily Telegraph*, the paper's former transport correspondent Paul Marston has become head of media relations at British Airways.

There is certainly room for improvement in BA's press coverage. News stories in the past year have revealed that the airline's staff "are to face alcohol and drug tests"; that BA had to send a fleet of lorries to the Continent to reunite passengers with their luggage a week after they flew out of Heathrow ("more than 6,000 delayed suitcases, backpacks and holdalls were still at the airport, despite the emergency switch of more than 100 managers and supervisors to help clear the backlog"); that "a woman junior pilot will take British Airways to an employment tribunal today alleging sex discrimination"; and that BA "has cancelled nearly 1,000 flights at Heathrow over the next three months in an effort to halt a prolonged slide in the reliability of its timetable".

Headlines such as "BA's check-in strikers threaten holiday chaos" weren't exactly helpful to the airline's image either.

Fortunately, the hack responsible for all these stories is unlikely to repeat the offence. Every one of them appeared in the *Daily Telegraph* under the byline of, er, Paul Marston.

**THE** *Daily Mail*, fresh from reshaping its own figures with a 2 percent loss of readers in the last six months, declared itself delighted by the news that the company behind the Atkins diet was closing its UK office.

"Good riddance to the Atkins!" declared one ecstatic headline, while elsewhere a "panel of Femail writers" gathered to "explain why the news is a huge relief".

Presumably it was another *Daily Mail* which had kicked off the whole ridiculous fad when it serialised Dr Robert Atkins' latest book over three days in February 2000 beneath the headline "How You Can Eat Yourself Young", appointed an "Atkins Agony Aunt" in the autumn of 2003 to help readers stick to the diet and ran a series of lengthy stories over the past five years claiming that an Atkins regime could not only "halt the signs of ageing and even make your brain far more powerful" but reduce cholesterol and cut the risk of breast cancer and epilepsy as well?

**THE** *Mail on Sunday* featured an extraordinary scoop on 20 March: "MINISTER ARRESTED FOR ATTACK ON YOUNG MOTHER".

The size of the headline meant there was only room on the front page to record the fact that pensions minister Chris Pond had launched a "violent attack" after having "exploded with rage". Readers had to buy the wretched paper and turn to the double-page spread inside to learn exactly what this vicious act had entailed.

In fact Pond had... stuck a notice to his neighbour's front door which had then fallen off leaving some glue behind, resulting in a police caution for criminal damage. If that counts as a violent attack, expect a sharp increase in this year's crime statistics...

## HACKWATCH

Mark Bolland

**AS** WE reported in the last *Eye*, Mark Bolland, former private secretary to the Prince of Wales, has resigned from his *News of the World* "Blackadder" column. "I have no idea if I was any good at all," he admits. "That's for others to judge." To assist the judging process, here's a souvenir tribute...

**9 November 2003:** High praise for the new Tory leader. "Like Maggie, Michael Howard is a politician of steel." Two weeks later, it is announced that Bolland's partner, Guy Black, is to become Howard's press secretary.

**23 November:** Apparently movie star John Travolta has rescued some children trapped in a lift. "Who's Britain's JT, I wonder?" Any particular reason why this strange thought occurs to him? "I was in New York last weekend and dined with John Travolta. It was a thrill to meet the star."

**7 December:** A shock disclosure from the great royal insider: "Nothing causes more commotion in royal circles than the choice of supplier for the Christmas puddings the Queen gives her staff every year... The one I enjoyed the best came from Tesco." Elsewhere on the page Mark shows off another acquaintance from the world of showbiz. "Barbara Windsor... I am proud to call her a friend."

**28 December:** Another fearless assessment of his boyfriend's new boss: "The new Tory leader started brilliantly – frightening Blair and proving there is an alternative to Labour for the first time in a decade. The political world will be his to conquer in 2004."

**29 February 2004:** "*Sex and the City* bowed out on American TV networks this week." And, as ever, *Screws* readers get a unique perspective: "I had dinner with its star, the lovely Sarah Jessica Parker, when I was in Los Angeles a couple of years ago."

**7 March:** "Hasn't Andrew Morton done well?" Bolland fumes. "He's made millions out of Diana's misery. Isn't it time this ghoul stopped cashing in on her information?" On the subject of making money out of the Windsors, what does he think of a former private secretary to a leading royal who last year revealed to *Screws* readers that "Michael Peat called me on holiday and asked: 'Do you think the Prince of Wales is bisexual?'" Sadly, we are not told; but there is room for another riveting showbiz vignette: "Nicole Kidman gave me a lift to the *Moulin Rouge* party when I was stranded after an Oscars bash. She'd spotted me looking pathetic and lost. It goes to show not all actors are selfish and grand."

**28 March:** "So Tom Cruise and Penelope Cruz have split" – and Bolland feels a personal sense of loss. "I had dinner with them once."

**11 April:** "Good news for lovely Kylie Minogue – she could be the next Bond girl." Guess what? "I met Kylie a couple of times with the Prince of Wales. He adored her, as did I. She was bright and bubbly but so tiny!" Who would have thought it?

**18 April:** The man is on a roll. "Rotten week for me, seeing Concorde all in pieces travelling down the Thames. How I wish BA would stop torturing this fantastic aircraft, in which I once sat excitedly behind George Michael..."

**11 July:** Eric Douglas, brother of Hollywood actor Michael, has died. Alas, Bolland didn't know the man, but the news somehow reminds him of... "Billy Carter – brother of former American President Jimmy Carter – whom I met at a party in Texas many years ago."

**1 August:** Following the suicide of a former winner from *Who Wants to be a Millionaire*, Bolland reaches a startling conclusion: "Money can buy a lot... but it can't buy you love." No, but turning out bilge every week buys you a new teak-decking balcony – which is what Bolland tells an interviewer he has done with his *Screws* fees.

**22 August:** "As a child, I marvelled at tragic Sue Ellen Ewing in *Dallas*, played by Linda Gray." And then? "She later became a friend..."

**5 September:** "Lots of people have been taking credit at the new Wembley Stadium – Blair, Beckham, the FA and Sven all showed off there this week. But not a word of thanks to the millions who paid for it by playing the Lotto." Why does Mark feel so strongly about this, having admitted in April that he has no interest in sport? Perhaps because Camelot is a major client of his new PR agency Mark Bolland Associates. Or, as he modestly puts it, "True, I've had some business dealings with the lottery..."

**24 October:** Prince Harry attacks a photographer outside a nightclub, but Bolland warns us not to judge him too harshly – "Harry's a great kid." How can he be so sure? "The first time I met him he was 12 and we were sitting in the back of a car being driven to an airport by his father. As the car stopped, Harry very politely asked me if I would carry his case of CDs for him because he had to shake the hand of some dignitary. Looking back, it's quite poignant." Elsewhere in the article, he complains that "uncontrolled gambling is a mindless world with links to drugs, bribery and violence. Yet a government bill wants to make it more accessible. Is there no MP with the courage to fight this?" Does the danger posed by this uncontrolled gambling extend to the scratchcards peddled by his client, Camelot? Clearly not.

**26 December:** Bolland offers new year predictions on the one subject in which he is an expert: "Camilla remains unwelcome and indecisive. Charles faces another frustrating, directionless year." Two months later, the couple announce their engagement.

**16 January 2005:** "Harry is becoming an embarrassment to the nation," Bolland rages, as his mate Rebekah Wade publishes photos of the prince in a Nazi uniform. "He is stupid, gullible and has a revolting circle of friends. That sad fact has been in evidence for some time." So much for October's "great kid", eh? Bolland's only hope is that "the army can put right what the royal system got wrong and instil some personal discipline and sense of history into this lager-swilling young man". A slight contrast with what he wrote just one week ago: "Prince Harry is telling anyone who will listen that he doesn't actually want to join the army after all... Maybe the military IS the wrong career for him."

**18 March:** Bolland quits his column. But there's good news from the paper's managing editor: "Happily Mark Bolland is going to continue to write for the *News of the World* on the topics that he is especially familiar with and other issues beyond that." Don't you love that "especially"?

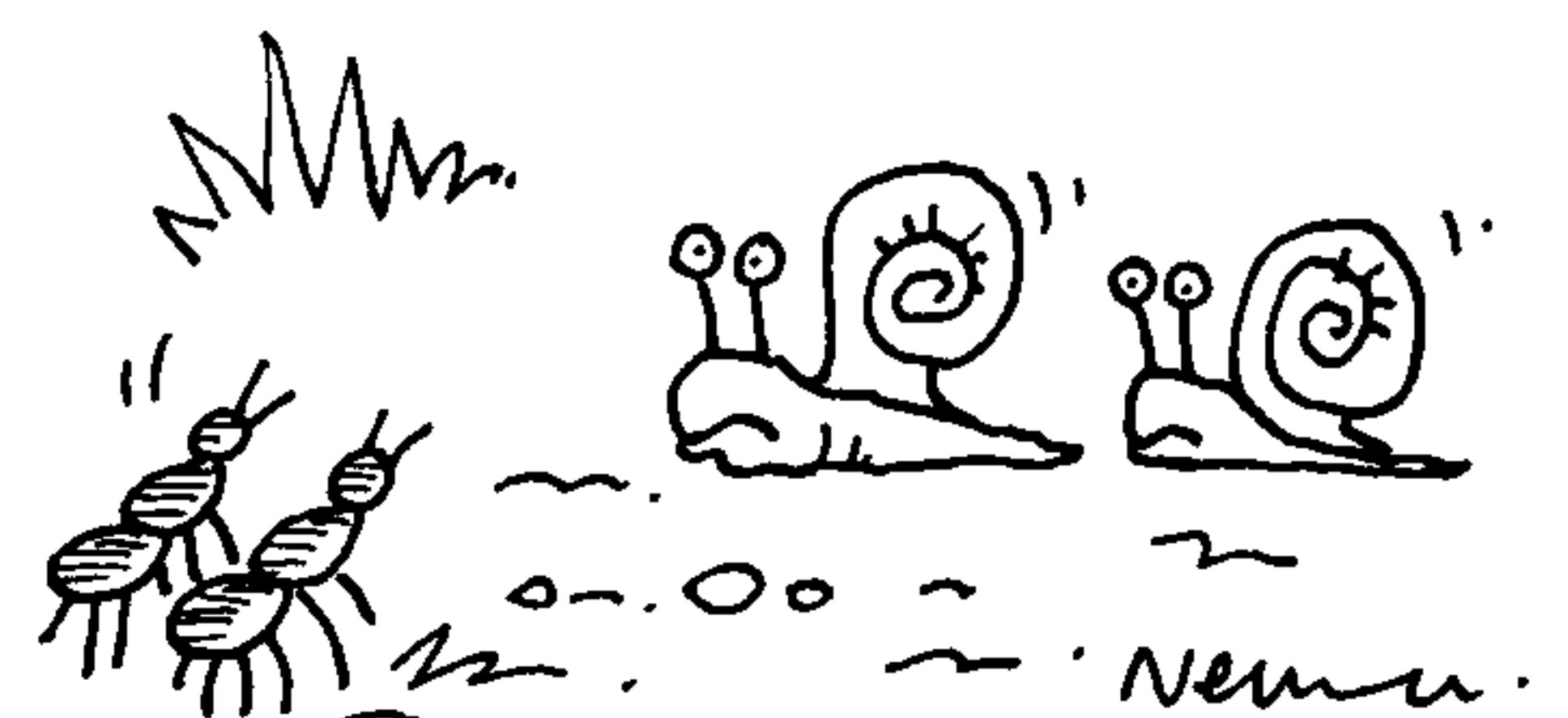
## JUST FANCY THAT!

"The Welsh victory over Ireland was far more comfortable than the 32-20 scoreline suggests..."

— *Sunday Times*, 20 March 2005, Sport p. 1

"The game was closer and more hard-fought than the 32-30 scoreline might indicate..."

— *Sunday Times*, 20 March 2005, Sport p. 2



"Oh no – travellers!"



## SCHOOL DINNERS

**TONY BLAIR's response to the furore raised by Jamie's School Dinners on TV has looked like a dog's breakfast.**

The prime minister claimed he was taking action to improve school meals and referred to his Building Schools for the Future programme. Alas, this scheme could actually make school meals worse than they are now.

According to a hurried article appearing under his name in the *Observer*, "the new Building Schools for the Future programme... will start systematically renovating primary and secondary schools nationwide, will improve kitchens and dining areas".

Oh yeah? The renovations are all PFI schemes under which schools typically hand design, construction and running of catering services to a contractor, with the strong possibility of cost cutting in the kitchen.

*Private Eye* asked the department for education if this really meant that Blair was introducing a new requirement for the scheme to include better kitchens with room for proper cooking or for rules governing PFI caterers. It said there were no such rules. "There is money available to schools to refurbish their kitchens in whichever way they choose to do so, but we are not going to proscribe how they do that. That is a matter for them on the ground responding to the needs of the school, views of parents and that sort of thing."

In fact even the prime minister's own "fact sheet" on Building Schools for the Future makes no mention of kitchens or school dinners. The government does claim that previous PFI schemes show how the renovations programme is the way forward; and ministers have argued that, for example, Lewisham's school meals PFI helped "raise standards". Really? Under this scheme the London borough's meals were handed to Scolarest, the "Turkey Twizzler" people seen on Oliver's TV show.

While an individual borough could in theory choose to use its Building Schools money to improve kitchens, many PFI bids follow the prime minister's lead and spend the cash on computer suites instead (now looking more and more educationally unhelpful) while skimping on catering.

But the strangest thing about Labour's response to *Jamie's School Meals* is its apparent surprise that Britain's kids are eating so much crap.

The school meals debate began when the Tories abolished nutritional regulation in the 1980 education act. As long ago as 1992 Robin Cook embarrassed the Tories by claiming that the restoration of school meal nutritional regulation had been dropped from a health white paper. In 1996 the then shadow education secretary David Blunkett told the Unison conference that contract caterers were doing a poor job and "short-term savings may be doing damage to the well-being and educational performance of our children. We need to set standards to regulate and monitor this crucial service." He repeated his call for nutritional regulation in 1997. But once in power Labour simply followed the Tories and issued "voluntary" guidelines drawn up with the help of, the catering firms.

## GLASSHOUSES

**UNSEEMLY squabbling in the Labour party on the eve of the general election – and all over a glass factory being built by an Irish businessman.**

It's particularly embarrassing for planning minister Keith Hill, who is at the centre of the glass factory row while also being mired in the controversy over illegal Irish traveller camps.

Problems hinge on the huge glass factory being built outside Chester by Quinn Glass, owned by Irish multi-millionaire Sean Quinn. After more than six months' delay, Hill recently "called in" the application, ordering a public inquiry and so delaying the plant's opening by up to a year.

Quinn – who has pocketed £5m of government money towards the plant from the DTI – has carried on regardless and is poised to fire up the furnaces in what will be Europe's biggest glass factory.

Meanwhile Chester city council, run by a Labour-Lib Dem coalition, stands by idly except for issuing an environmental licence to the plant which drives a coach and horses through government emissions targets. Local MP Andrew Miller has launched a bitter attack on Hill after the latter decided to launch a public inquiry.

Also in his sights are fellow Labour MPs in Yorkshire, who are against the plant because of its effect on glass-industry jobs in their own constituencies.

Bill O'Brien, MP for Normanton, has raised the matter with Elliot Morley, the environment minister, on pollution grounds. The Amicus union is also objecting, not least because of the use of itinerant, non-unionised Irish labourers to build the factory.

Quinn, in fact, has recently suffered an adverse judgment in the Irish labour court for non-recognition of unions. How Miller, a former official in the MSF, which is now part of Amicus, squares his local position with his former union role is a mystery to his colleagues.

The row is likely to deepen after the election as the successor to O'Brien, who is standing down from his safe seat, will be Ed Balls, the chancellor's close ally, setting the scene for a three-way battle involving Brown, Hill and the DTI as pressure grows on the government to stop Quinn turning the plant on.

## PROLIER THAN THOU

**WHAT do Labour parliamentary candidates Sue Hayman, standing in Presili in the general election, and Emily Thornberry, in Islington South, have in common?**

Both like to claim impeccable left-wing proletarian credentials, which don't stand up to scrutiny.

Hayman infuriated her local comrades when she wrote to them recently saying she was "proud to be fighting for Clwyd West" even though she is supposed to be fighting for, er, Presili. What the comrades didn't know when they selected this friend of Tony is that Hyman is a former public schoolgirl whose millionaire businessman father, John Bentley, has a desirable residence in Cornwall complete with private beach.

In 1997 she was known as Sue Clarke and the Labour candidate for Tiverton, until her extra-marital affair with her press agent, Ross Hyman (then husband of BBC West newsreader Sally Challenor) was splashed all over the tabloids. hilariously, Sue Hyman, as she is now known, also claims to be a Cambridge graduate with a background in publishing. In fact she attended Cambridge Poly and once had a spell as a sales assistant in a bookshop.

Emily Thornberry, who hopes to replace Chris Smith in Islington South, likes to pose as a woman of the people who was raised on a council estate. In fact Thornberry lives two doors down from Tony and Cherie's old house in the wealthiest part of Islington and is married to wealthy high court judge, Chris Nugee. Not surprisingly, perhaps, Thornberry employs an au pair and, like Tony and Cherie, sends one of her

children to a selective school.

At the recent notorious party at City Hall staged by Ken Livingstone to mark the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chris Smith's decision to "come out", press attention focused on the mayor's drunken altercation with *Evening Standard* journalist Oliver Finegold, whom he accused of acting "like a concentration camp guard". But an equally heated row was taking place elsewhere. Partygoers were shocked to hear a furious row between Thornberry and Chris Smith's partner, Dorian Jabri. An incandescent Jabri was busily accusing Thornberry of "stabbing Chris in the back" and spreading all manner of ugly rumours about the retiring MP's health problems. Such is the rumbling civil war in faction-driven Islington South Labour Party that no serious campaigning appears to be taking place at all.

## FLY THE RED FLAG

**SO MUCH for Gordon Brown's "old" Labour credentials. He has just taken on a union-busting, asset-stripping employee of Rupert Murdoch as an adviser.**

According to the chancellor, retiring BA boss Rod Eddington will help the treasury and transport departments "examine Britain's long term needs and priorities".

At BA one of Eddington's priorities was taking on the unions. In 2003 he provoked a strike over new shift patterns, then performed a swift and embarrassing climbdown. His work for Murdoch and previous dust-ups with the unions also bear examination.

Eddington currently earns \$137,000 as a board member of Murdoch's Newscorp. He got into Rupert's good books when the Dirty Digger appointed him manager of Ansett, an airline owned by Newscorp, in 1997. Ansett slashed its workforce, leading to the Australian joke: "How do you develop a small airline? Give a big one to Rod Eddington."

In 2000 Murdoch sold Ansett to Air New Zealand (ANZ). However, regulators grounded all Ansett's planes over safety fears when the scale of the maintenance backlog that had built up under Eddington's rule became apparent. Ansett almost made its new owner, ANZ, go bust, but by now Eddington was safely in the pilot's seat at BA, able to ignore Ansett's new owners' rage at what he had sold them.

Murdoch had hired Eddington for Ansett because he was impressed by his earlier record at Cathay Pacific. He became manager there in 1992 and by 1993 had provoked a formerly loyal and moderate cabin crew workforce into a long, bruising strike which the company lost.

Eddington said he learned two lessons from that dispute. The first was that the government needed to pass tighter laws to help employers beat disputes. The second was that employers needed better PR. Eddington claimed: "Clearly, when it was 4,000 pretty girls against a bunch of old men in grey suits, we didn't stand a chance. But that didn't mean we didn't have to try."

He got his chance for better PR in the 2003 dispute at BA, when the *Sun* said strikers were motivated by "sheer spite and bloody-mindedness". The newspaper did not disclose that Eddington was a director of NewsCorp.



"You can't say it's 'political correctness gone mad' – it's 'political correctness gone mentally challenged'"

## Getting Women Back To Work



"You look after mine, I'll take hers, she'll take yours..."

## MR LOBBY

**IF businesses want to earn money from governments of whatever persuasion, they must establish a "magic circle" and hire a lobbyist.**

That was the gist of a meeting held at the Commons last week by political lobbying firm Lewis Public Affairs. It was entitled "Can lobbying ever influence government?" and the key speaker was Clive Booth, Tory parliamentary candidate for York and head of lobbying at Lewis. He was accompanied by his chum John Hayes, Tory shadow minister for local and devolved government.

The business breakfast discussion covered the use of lobbyists to win government contracts. As the invitation said: "The government has announced cost savings of £22bn through rationalisation and better deployment of IT infrastructure in the public sector. With 42 percent of GDP spent by government, the public sector will continue to be the biggest purchaser of goods and services from the private sector."

Private Eye asked Lewis PR, which specialises in representing IT firms, if it organised the meeting to show that hiring lobbyists can help firms win contracts. A spokesperson said Lewis believed that "lobbying the government can make a difference" and Lewis PR could help influence decisions by lobbying ministers and civil servants.

Booth was due to tell guests about the need for "establishing your own Magic Circle to influence the influencers" and about "examples of lobbying activities that have changed government thinking".

## FAG ENDS

**A FEW weeks after Eye 1121 revealed that the government had signed a secret cooperation deal with the big tobacco manufacturers on cigarette smuggling, while the department of trade concluded an equally secret inquiry that exonerated British American Tobacco from any illegal activity, fresh rumours emerge of deals to protect executives from prosecution.**

The *Sunday Times* has reported allegations that Customs officials approached accountancy firm KPMG to broker a deal under which the firms would pay back-taxes in return for immunity from prosecution. Both the companies and Customs hotly deny this, though the Commons' public accounts committee (PAC) chairman Edward Leigh has vowed to investigate.

Another possibility he might like to consider is that the services of KPMG weren't needed to calculate back-taxes as there was no question of the companies paying any. To have done so would have implied complicity in cigarette smuggling and invited awkward questions about prosecutions. Much easier to sign a cosy memorandum of cooperation away from public glare and bury the report into the firms' activities.

# BUDGET SPECIAL

## Offshore, off limits

**WHILE the billionaires who live in Britain but declare themselves "non-domiciled" escape tax on the fortunes they have stashed all over the world, they are at least supposed to pay their dues on the money they make in this country. But even that seems to have been too much for some, judging by one of Gordon Brown's less well-publicised tax measures.**

It seems some of the greedier "non-doms" have been making sure that they move valuable assets out of the country just before selling them for tidy profits, neatly avoiding the tiresome tax bill that anyone else would face.

With the chancellor announcing a series of proposals to clamp down on tax avoidance to "ensure that an unfair burden does not fall on the vast majority of taxpayers who pay their fair share", this kind of scam might have been expected to provoke him into honouring the commitment he made in opposition to tax non-doms like every other British resident.

Since he made that promise, however, some enormous donations have been made to the Labour party from a number of non-domiciled businessmen including Lakshmi Mittal and Lord Paul. Meanwhile Gordon, entirely coincidentally of course, has become much more tolerant of them.

So, faced with current misbehaviour, which treasury figures suggest is costing the government a few million pounds each year, Brown has simply tweaked the rules to block the latest trick, leaving the penny-pinching billionaires free to enjoy the huge general concession for non-domiciled status.

The lucky few will continue to pay a fraction of the rate of tax of the humblest British worker, at a cost of hundreds of millions if not billions of pounds to, er, "the vast majority of taxpayers who pay their fair share".

## Morality tale

**AMONG the chancellor's larger tax-raising measures was a move to stop multinational companies using ingenious legal structures to pick up multiple tax reliefs for simply passing billions of pounds around the world.**

As the latest proposal will only affect the most avaricious and expertly-advised tax dodger, there could be little cause for complaint. But that did not deter the accountancy firms.

PricewaterhouseCoopers' head of tax Richard Collier-Keywood whinged that following this "widespread attack on international tax planning... companies will seek to reduce their footprint in the UK". He was too polite to mention that selling these wheezes goes a long way to paying his

partners' average £600,000 salaries.

Such nice little earners also help pay the handsome fees of PwC advisory board member and former Inland Revenue chairman Sir Nicholas Montagu. In his final days at the Revenue, facing intense criticism for flogging his tax offices to a tax haven company and for going soft on corporate tax dodging, Montagu launched a crusade against the immorality of tax avoidance. Quoting American philosopher Oliver Wendell-Holmes, he piously declared that "taxes are what we pay for a civilised society".

Clearly in his six months on the PwC payroll, moral Montagu has yet to bring the uncivilised Mr Collier-Keywood into line.

PS: Another of the chancellor's critics was Ernst & Young tax partner Chris Sanger, who complained that the change would "make investing in Britain less attractive". Until 2001 Sanger was seconded to the treasury from Arthur Andersen, working with Brown's special tax adviser Chris Wales (now at US investment bank Goldman Sachs). The pair's time at the chancellor's side was notable mainly for the lack of any serious action on international tax avoidance, much to the delight of the multinationals now richly rewarding them.

## School project

**ALTHOUGH the chancellor clamped down on PwC's tax avoidance work, there was consolation for the firm in his announcement that £9bn will be spent on extending the government's "building schools for the future" initiative to primary as well as secondary schools.**

The programme will naturally be run under the private finance initiative, with the inevitably extensive use of consultancy firms.

Brown's announcement came just days after the body running the schools PFI scheme, Partnerships for Schools, announced the team of advisers that will work on the billions of pounds worth of contracts. Among those lined up to provide "financial services" is, naturally, tax avoidance specialist PwC.

What Gordon takes from the consultants with one hand, he generally gives back with another.

PS: PwC is also shortly due to deliver an "independent" review of the government's city academy initiative, hot on the heels of a damning report from an MPs' committee. Schools minister Stephen Twigg has let it be known that his department's pet project will not be derailed. His strong views and the fact that his department is a major client of PwC will in no way cloud the firm's objectivity.

## BRUSSELS SPROUTS



**THE European parliament is at last getting tough over MEPs who sign on early in the morning for their £185 daily expense allowances before going straight home again.**

This flagrant abuse of an already generous system was famously captured on film by a camera crew for the German magazine *Stern*. The parliament has now decided to act... by setting up an obscure five-member management committee of "quaestors" which is considering restricting filming and photography on the premises!

The quaestors have the power to remove the right of "guilty" cameramen and photographers from earning their living by reporting in parliament buildings. They could be banned for a specified period or lose accreditation entirely.

Needless to say nothing has been done about the greedy MEPs or a system that allows them to line their pockets shamelessly at taxpayers' expense. Said José Liberato of the the parliament's administration: "We can't have a

policeman to see if they stay on [working]," he snorted indignantly.

According to the Austrian reformist MEP Dr Hans-Peter Martin, a former lawyer and journalist, the most blatant abuse occurs on Friday mornings in Strasbourg when around 100 MEPs regularly sign on for allowances before scuttling off home for the weekend. It's hard to see how they can justify their presence in Strasbourg at all, says Martin, as all the institutions shut on Fridays. "Standards of behaviour are not up to what is expected in a western democracy," he believes.

PS: While the parliament ignores its own greedy rip-off merchants, the EU institutions themselves continue to persecute the German investigative journalist Hans-Martin Tillack. It is just over a year since the EU authorities set the Belgian police up to confiscate his electronic and paper files containing his contacts within the EU institutions, effectively stopping him writing any more about the scams and cheating that are endemic in Brussels.

Judgment from the European court of justice in Luxembourg is expected soon on Tillack's petition to block the European commission from having access to his files. He is also seeking damages.

# TIME

Doctor Who (BBC1)

Ask The Family With  
Dick & Dom (BBC2)

Pro-Celebrity Golf With  
Ant & Dec (ITV1)

**W**ITH President Bush defying medical wisdom and insisting that those in long-term comas should be kept going just in case science should ever revive them, it's at least good news that any successful revenants will find that British culture is much the same as when they went under.

Tony Christie and Elvis are at the top of the pop charts and the 2005 television schedules are increasingly indistinguishable from those of the 60s. This week, *Doctor Who* comes back; next week, it's *Ask The Family*.

These returns were probably inevitable once *Come Dancing* was successfully re-spun; but the viewer begins to get nervous of turning on the evening news and hearing that Harold Wilson has been talking to John Lennon.

All of these repolished projects are aiming to attract two audiences. The first is the current middle-aged, who have proved to be a Peter Pan generation, insisting on having all of the same music, food and movies they enjoyed as children. But this isn't enough to have a hit the second time around. You also have to appeal to those eternal children's children.

So what you want is a combination of familiarity and innovation. *Doctor Who* pretty much

achieves this: the anoraks will enjoy new writer Russell T. Davies's post-modern nods to monsters of the past like the Hardons, who appeared briefly in the background of an episode with dear William Hartnell in the 60s, but there are good new plot twists involving the internet and Christopher Eccleston, an actor who has done his dues in Strindberg and Shakespeare, makes the whole thing respectable for viewers and critics who used to find the whole thing a bit tacky.

*Ask The Family* feels like a harder ask, as they say in post-match football interviews these days. Tom Baker to Chris Eccleston might be a bit of jump, but it's nothing like the gulf from dear old Robert Robinson to Dick and Dom, who now replace the hairless polymath as hosts.

Should the pair happen to begin the show by asking "Who are Dick and Dom?", the answer is that they are what the BBC came up with when they decided

*Dancing* back in the schedules in various forms, will look like a hotbed of original thinking alongside ITV1. Not only will the August bank holiday feature a comeback for *Pro-Celebrity Golf*, hosted by Ant & Dec, but, earlier in the sunshine months, the third channel is threatening to celebrate its 50th anniversary with a festival of retreads: a whole week of abandoned quiz formats revived and presented by – can't you guess? – Ant & Dec.

Among shows being dusted off for the couple are rumoured to be: *Family Fortunes*, *Wheel of Fortune*, *3-2-1* and *Blockbusters*. While ITV1 will claim that this foray of resprays is merely a birthday celebration, it seems obvious that the network is running a surreptitious series of pilots for the next 70s or 80s remake to be rebranded with the bald Geordie and the short Geordie.

What's depressing about this development, apart from the prospect of seeing quite so much of Ant & Dec, is that it suggests that complete format-exhaustion

has now occurred in television. The artist Damien Hirst has just put out "new paintings" which consist of copies of photographs, giving as his reason that there are no new images to be found. TV seems to feel the same, although the frequency of re-runs is also a consequence of multi-channel schedules.

If executives need titles that will win quick recognition on electronic diaries, then the pressure is towards repeats and revivals.

But, whatever the reasons, it's a truly horrifying thought for viewers of the future that television does seem to have reached the end of its imagination. We're about to see the first fruit of Graham Norton's lucrative deal with the BBC: a variation of *Strictly Come Dancing*. That the only format to be found for a star signed for millions is a spin-off from a retread is enough to send the audience spinning off into a deep depression.

**'Remote Controller'**

## FAYED FETCHED

**"THIS, I suspect, is the start of a trend towards taking Fayed's claims over the Paris accident seriously,"** wrote Jonathan Margolis in the *Independent*, previewing this week's Channel 4 documentary in which the Harrods owner will once again rehearse his ludicrous claims about Prince Philip and the death of Diana.

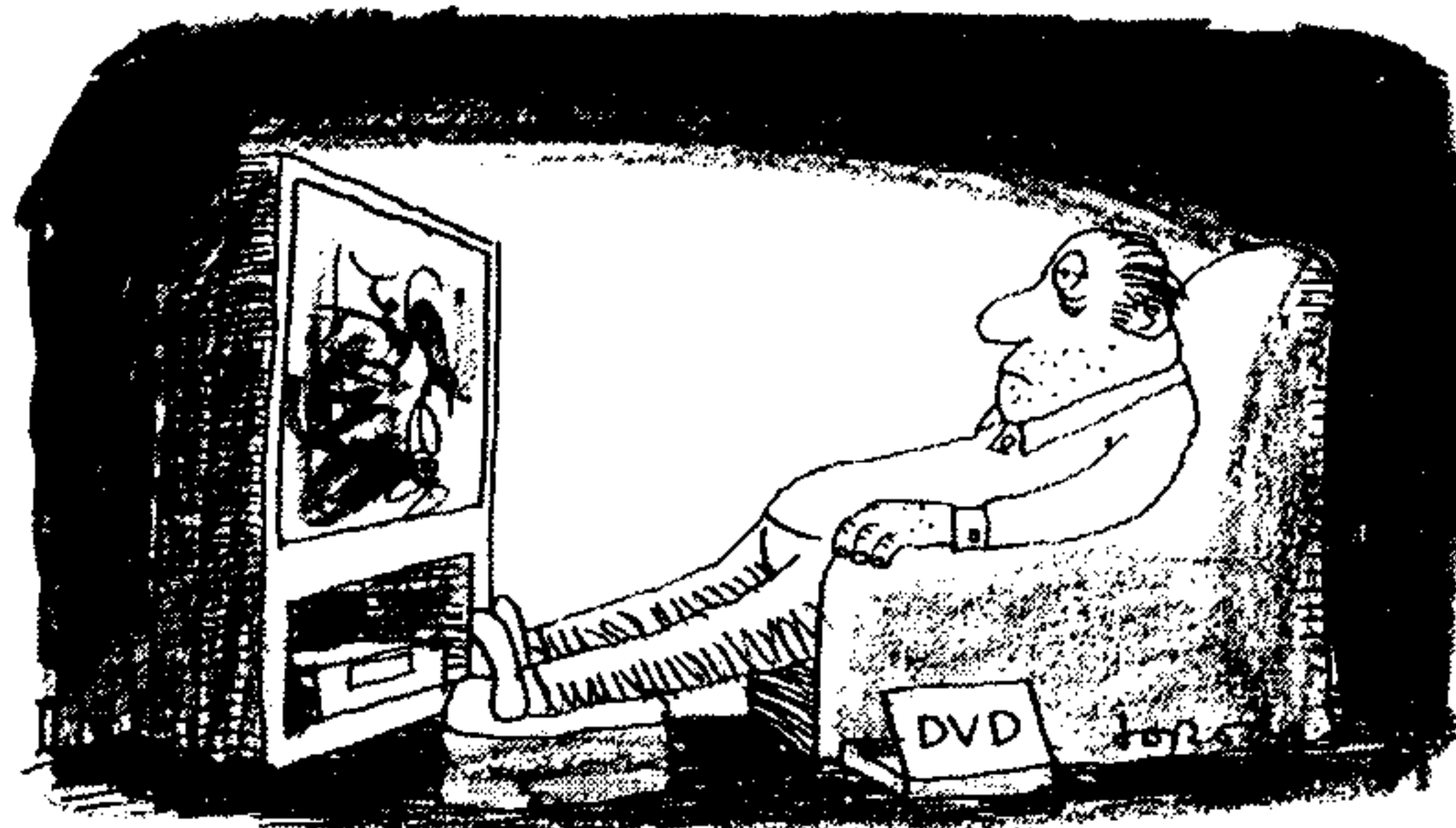
Certainly Margolis seemed happy to take anything the phoney pharaoh told him in his accompanying interview at face value, declaring blithely that "Harrods is doing splendidly, and the Fayed bank balance doesn't seem to be in bad shape at all" (see Slicker *passim*).

Fayed was at least slightly more honest than usual about his origins, claiming that the inflation of his family's social standing and fortune in Egypt at the time he purchased Harrods was entirely down to "a PR man who said all these things without my permission. I said, 'Why you do the bullshit, because it's not right. It's baloney'... I've always said I come from a humble background." He failed to explain why in that case he and his brother had spent so much time and money opposing the three-year DTI investigation which concluded something very similar – although that used the phrase "deception of regulatory authorities practised on such a grand scale".

Fayed still seems to find it hard to tell the entire truth about his father's occupation. He told Margolis that "My father was the chief inspector of northern Egypt for the ministry of education," whereas in fact Aly Aly Fayed was a primary school teacher. And he made no mention of the role that Adnan Khashoggi, Papa Doc Duvalier and the Sultan of Brunei played (mostly without realising) in funding his early business ventures, claiming that the only funds he received were "500 Egyptian pounds from my grandfather when I opened my office at 18".

In fact Fayed worked as a furniture salesman for Khashoggi, his then brother-in-law, until 1957 – including the period when he told Margolis he was "involved with" the filming of *The Ten Commandments* as an "agent for 20th Century Fox in Egypt" – no mean achievement, since Cecil B DeMille's epic was made by rival studio Paramount.

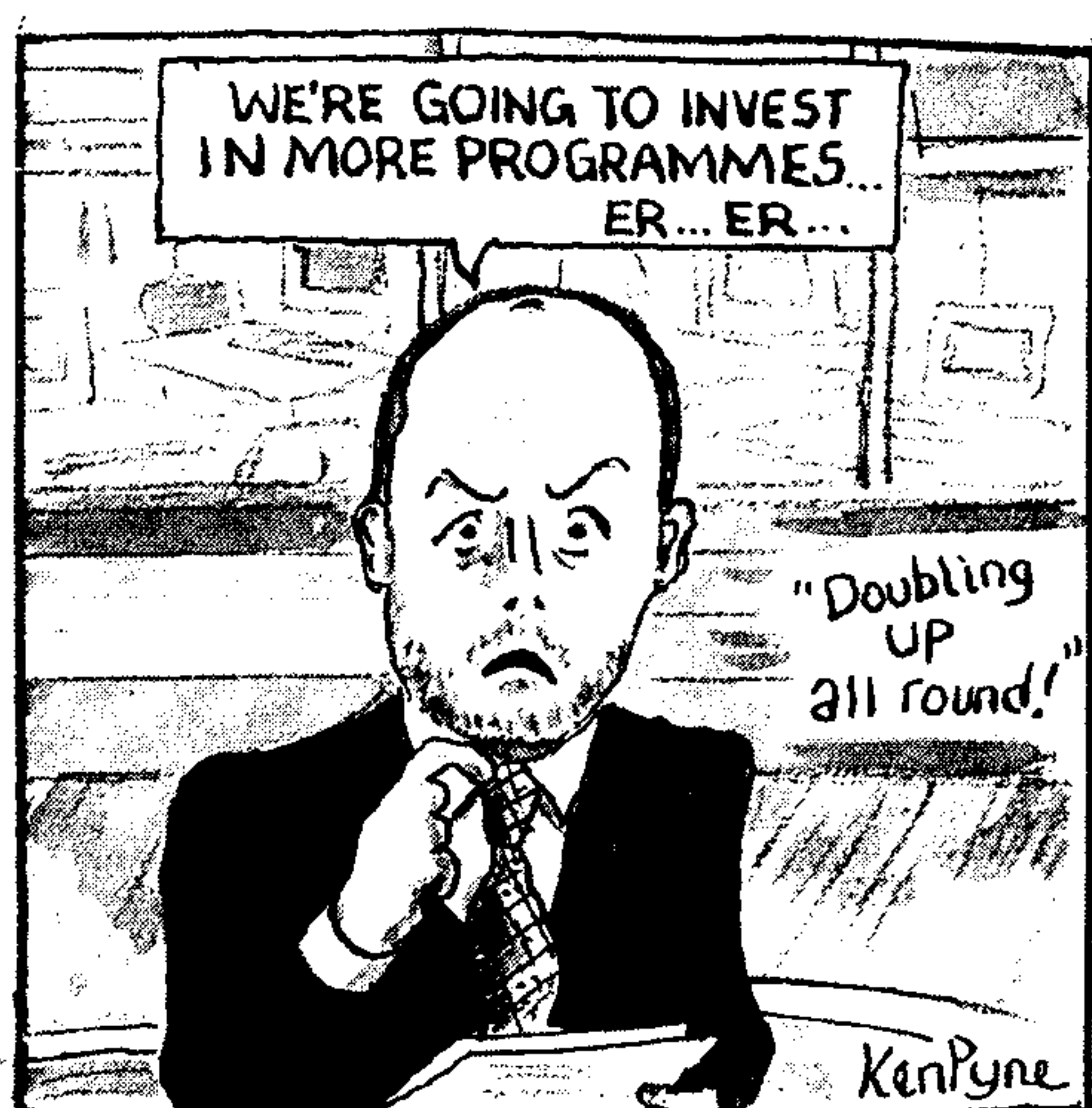
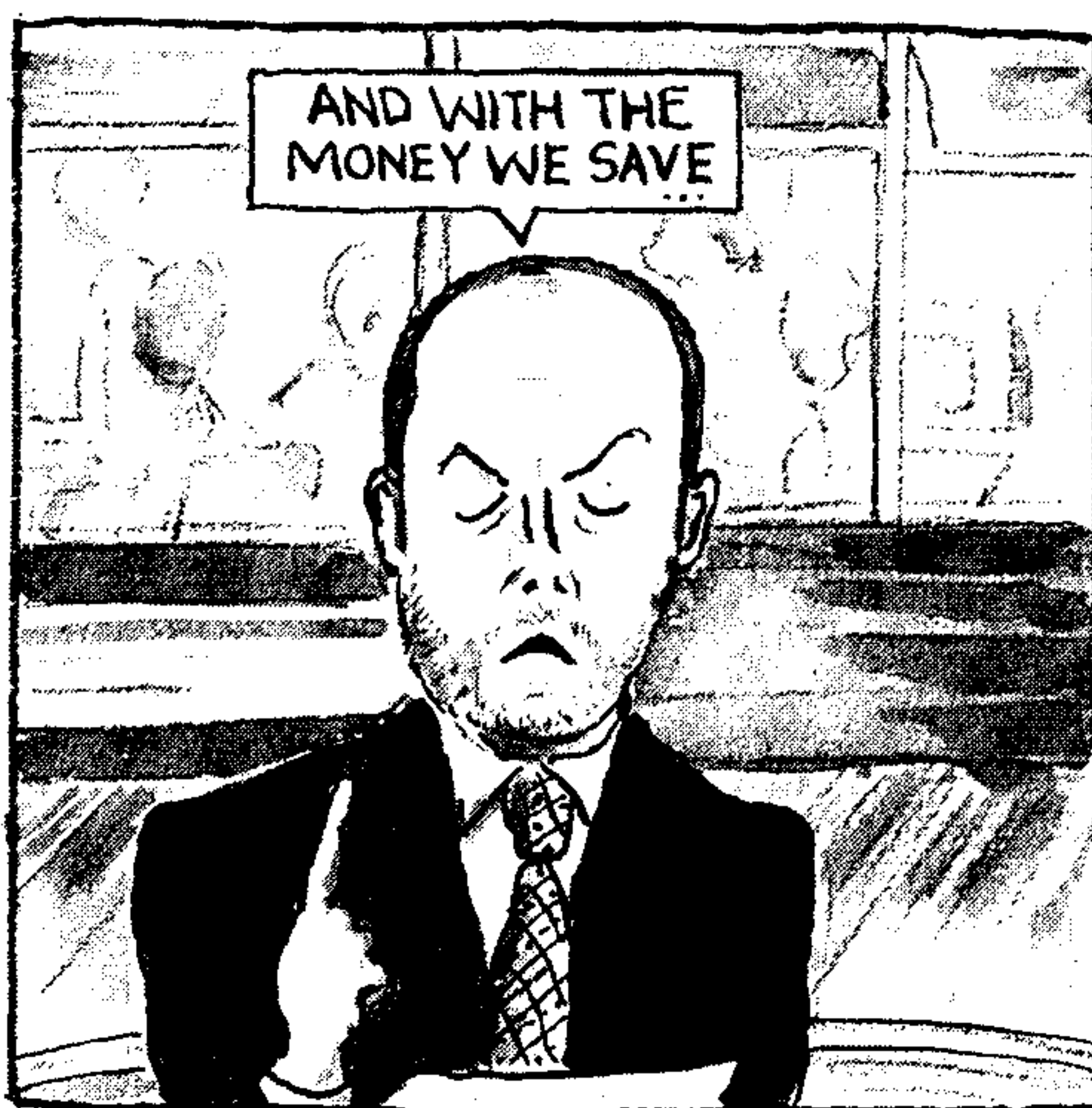
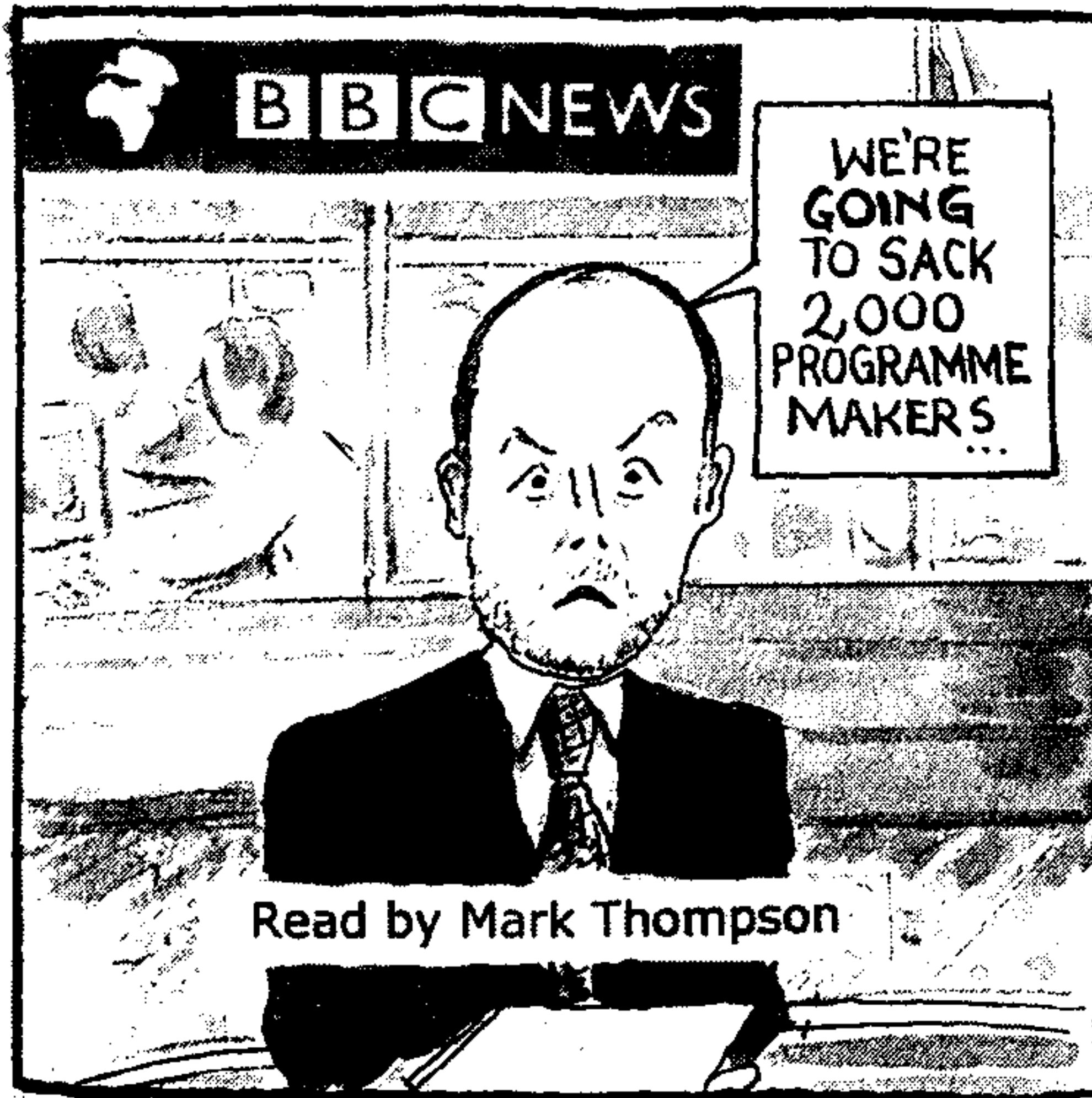
PS: One of the "revelatory and often hilarious exchanges" between Fayed and presenter Keith Allen in the Channel 4 programme is apparently that he "has something on Michael Howard" which he will release to the press if it looks like the Tories will triumph in the next election. Could it be in any way related to his long-held belief that Howard received bungs worth up to £1.5m from his rival Tiny Rowland to launch the DTI investigation back nearly two decades ago – a claim he has already made on so many occasions it was investigated and rejected by the parliamentary commissioner for standards as long ago as 1997?

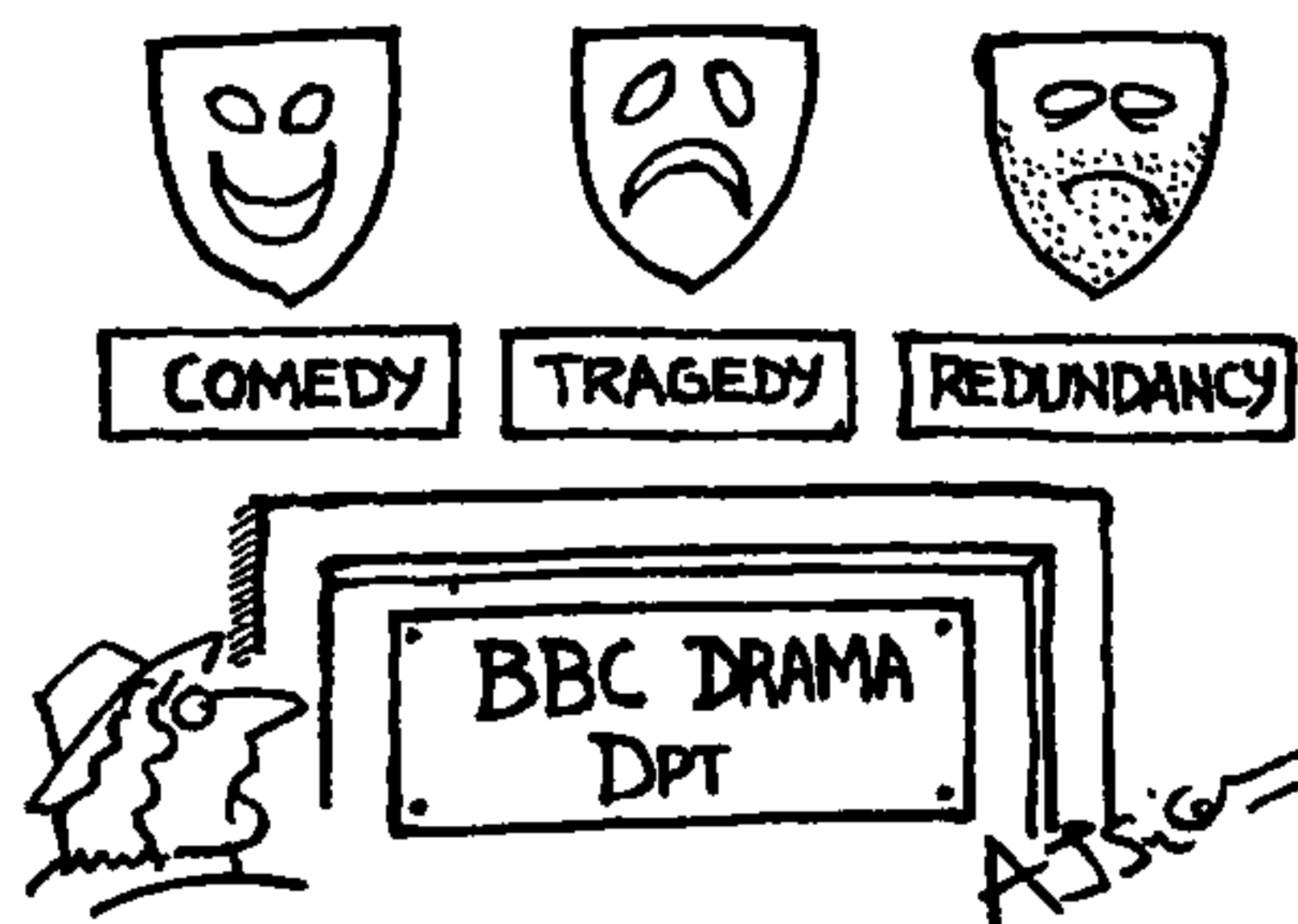


"This is the director's commentary telling you to go to bed"

they needed their own Ant & Dec. But science has shown that clones tend to mutate; and while Ant & Dec are canny lads who your granny could safely watch, Dick & Dom specialise in juvenile innuendo, recently receiving a torrent of complaints for a kids show sketch in which one of them played a mother giving birth, with a stream of nippers appearing from between his legs. In this case, it might have been wiser to give the quiz a new title, except that that would clash with the marketing mantra that telly nostalgia is where it's at.

Even so, by the summer the BBC, with *Ask The Family*, *University Challenge* and *Come*





## WREATH LECTURES

**THE 6,000 job losses announced by BBC director-general Mark Thompson are the price staff are having to pay for the corporation's continued grovelling to the government to secure charter renewal.**

Ever since the Hutton whitewash the BBC has done everything the department for culture, media 'n' sport has asked of it and more: issuing Heep-like apologies where none was needed; convincing the governors to abolish themselves; committing the BBC to leading the digital switchover.

This last commitment is the most important as far as the government is concerned. As with the sale of hugely lucrative mobile telephone licences, the treasury is set to make another small fortune when spare space on the spectrum is sold after analogue switch off.

A grateful culture secretary Tessa Jowell will thus see to it that the charter is renewed in 2006 and that the licence fee remains in place. The defining crisis for the corporation will actually come 10 years later, in 2016. As a publisher/broadcaster with a diminished programme-making base and no commitment to training a new generation of talent, so little of the corporation's public service mantle will remain that demands for a change in its funding will be inevitable and possibly irresistible.

**"I CAN'T see how the BBC will deliver all Thompson's promises about new services after ditching so many staff," claims Luke Crawley from BECTU, the hopeless broadcasting union.**

The answer is simple. The director-general is turning the BBC into a publisher/broadcaster just as he did with Channel Four.

Despite promises of new investment in programme making, much, much more output will come from independent production companies. Hence the need for fewer in-house staff.

Thompson recently said that as a broadcasting facility Television Centre was "fucked". That no longer matters. And though Thompson has said his job cuts will be phased in "over three years", some in news and current affairs have been told their jobs could disappear in the next 12 months.

**THE director-general also believes that new technology will help reduce the need for staff. But the BBC's record in this area has been disastrous.**

It took five years and £2m to eliminate the glitches in ENPS, the Beeb's electronic news production system; and the BBC's electronic accounting system, SAPS, still deletes invoices randomly and generates hundreds of queries.

Cock-ups like these will only generate profits for the private companies who are snapping up bits of the BBC with the blessing of a culture secretary who professes to value an "independent" public service broadcaster so highly. It is they who will provide repairs and training and the licence-payer who will pay for it.

Siemens has already bagged BBC Technology for £150m and Jowell will shortly rubber-stamp the sale of BBC Broadcast, probably to a French outfit for £100m.

**BACK in November 2002, the Guardian reported there was a £200m shortfall in the BBC's budget and that voluntary redundancies were likely even then.**

Mark Damazer, then head of news, issued a

hasty denial to staff: "We will end the charter period with neither a financial surplus nor a deficit... We told the *Guardian* their story was wrong."

But was it? Before the year ending March 2003, BBC departments could roll over any spare money into the next financial year to cover any extra drain on resources caused by wars, major international sporting fixtures and the like.

But the government's demand that the BBC impose a new "efficiency programme" ended this flexibility. For 2003 to 2004, any department that underspent found its actual spending set as a base for the following year. This directly contributed to the black hole that has helped the BBC to a deficit in 2004 of £240m.

**"WE NEED to free up money to start investing in our digital future," said Mark Thompson. The sheer size of the savings needed to free up funds for digital terrestrial television tells licence-payers all they need to know about how well the digital project is going.**

The commitment to digital was a key demand of the DCMS in return for charter renewal, but there is a problem. Analogue television sets are still being sold in shops and more than 25 percent of the population will not be able to receive digital signals until *after* the analogue signal is switched off in order to make room for digital transmissions.

**INSULT was added to injury at the BBC when the news that a further 2,000 staff were being made redundant was swiftly followed by the hiring of Piers "fake pictures" Morgan as presenter of a new early evening chat show on BBC2.**

The show is ominously described as having a "Letterman feel", words the corporation previously used about the disastrous waste of money that was *Johnny Vaughan Tonight* on BBC3 and, prior to that, the even shorter-lived *After All* with Danny Baker.

But even without this curse being whispered over the new-born programme's cradle, plenty of staff question the wisdom of splashing cash on a presenter whose current Channel 4 effort, *Morgan And Platell*, recently pulled in a derisory 390,000 viewers in a similar time slot and, if the current trend continues, will soon be enjoying an official viewing rating of zero as its audience becomes too small to count.

Moron's stint as a guest presenter on ITV's *This Morning*, meanwhile, was chiefly memorable for the mass panic "the Insider" sparked by predicting an imminent terrorist attack without realising that he was live on air.

## JOINED-UP BBC

**Dec 2004:** D-G Mark Thompson announces that up to 1,800 BBC staff will be moved to Manchester to "reconnect and embed the BBC in communities all over the UK"

**March 2005:** Thompson announces that the highest proportion of redundancies in any department will come from BBC regions

## DUMB BRITAIN

*The Weakest Link, BBC2*

**Anne Robinson:** Which daily newspaper has the nickname "the *Grauniad*" because of its large number of typographical errors?

**Contestant:** The *Mirror*.

**AR:** The title "Countess" is given to the wife of which rank of the British nobility?

**Contestant:** Queen.



**DUMB SOUTH AFRICA**

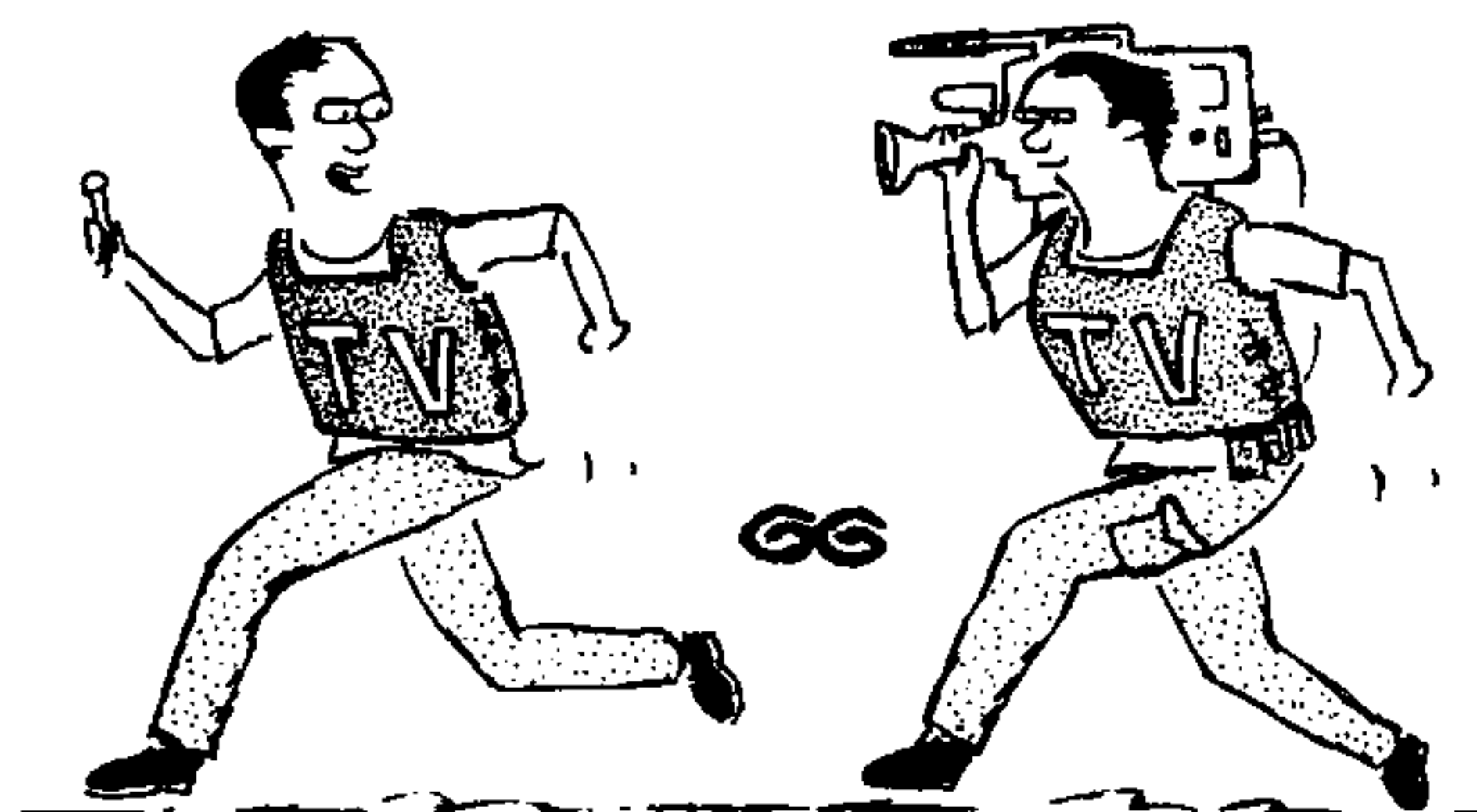
*The Weakest Link*

**Presenter:** Who was the first woman to fly across the Atlantic in 1928?

**Contestant:** Lady Godiva.

**Presenter:** In athletics, name the only African to win the men's Olympic 100 metre title.

**Contestant:** Haile Selassie.



"More people wailing over here!"

## MEDIA NEWS

**UKTV History continues to impress viewers with the historical accuracy of some of its programmes.**

In *War At Sea: The Battleship*, produced by US News Video, we learned that the appearance of the German battleship Tirpitz was "a chance for the USS Iowa to test its guns in action". A few shots of the Tirpitz later and the commentator added: "The Iowa class battleships had performed well."

Alas, there was then no time to reveal that it was British midget submarines that crippled the Tirpitz and British heavy bombers sank it.

## JUST FANCY THAT!

**"David Beckham - Place of Birth:** Leytonstone, London (England). **Date of Birth:** 02/05/1975. **Weight:** 74kgs. **Height:** 182 cms. **Curious Facts:** He likes tattoos and enjoys trying new models in his free time."

— Player profile from the Real Madrid team website, [realmadrid.com](http://realmadrid.com)

## SUPERMODELS

K E R B E R



## Down on the Farm

**U**NTIL now the biggest robbery in British history was the £26m stolen by the IRA from the Northern Bank. But this has put Rosa Klebb (aka Margaret Beckett) and her officials at the Department for the Elimination of Farming and Rural Affairs (Defra) on their mettle. They have now determined to snatch the record with a cunning plan to steal no less than £600m from England's dairy farmers.

In September 2003 the EU's farming commissioner Franz Fischler unveiled his much-vaunted reform of the common agricultural policy (CAP). Instead of subsidising production, farm payments would in future be based on the size of the land a farmer owns. This took a step further the changes begun under the previous much-vaunted reform of the CAP under commissioner McSharry. Under this earlier reform, Brussels drastically cut back on subsidies given to arable farmers and others by intervention schemes, but compensated them for what they had lost under various new forms of subsidy such as the notorious IACS (for "integrated administration and control system").

One sector not included in McSharry's 1992 reform was the dairy industry, which continued to operate under a scheme based on intervention prices. So when Fischler came up with his plans in 2003, it was decided to bring dairy farmers into line with other recipients of subsidies by ending their intervention scheme and compensating them by means of a special new arrangement known as the "dairy premium".

Under this, according to the new regulatory law promulgated by Brussels, the dairy farmers of England would be entitled to a total of £600m between 2005 and 2012, based on the amount of milk quota they held on 31 March 2005. But



"These grain barons really flaunt it"

when Rosa and her officials saw this £600m specifically earmarked for the dairy farmers, the temptation was too much. Unlike their counterparts elsewhere in the EU, including those in Scotland and Wales, they decided to ignore the law laid down in Brussels and simply to add the £600m to the general EU farm subsidy pot. Thus most of the money could be handed over to the barley barons and the other arable farmers who have always got much more out of Brussels subsidies than anyone else.

When the dairy farmers cottoned on to this daylight robbery they were so angry that, through Charles Holt, a Lincolnshire consultant, they took legal advice. This confirmed that Rosa's refusal to pass on the dairy premium to those for whom it was intended was a clear breach of the law. So on 14 January, through the Bristol firm of Burges Salmon, they sent her a copy of the QC's opinion, suggesting that if she didn't change her mind, they would apply to the courts for a ruling.

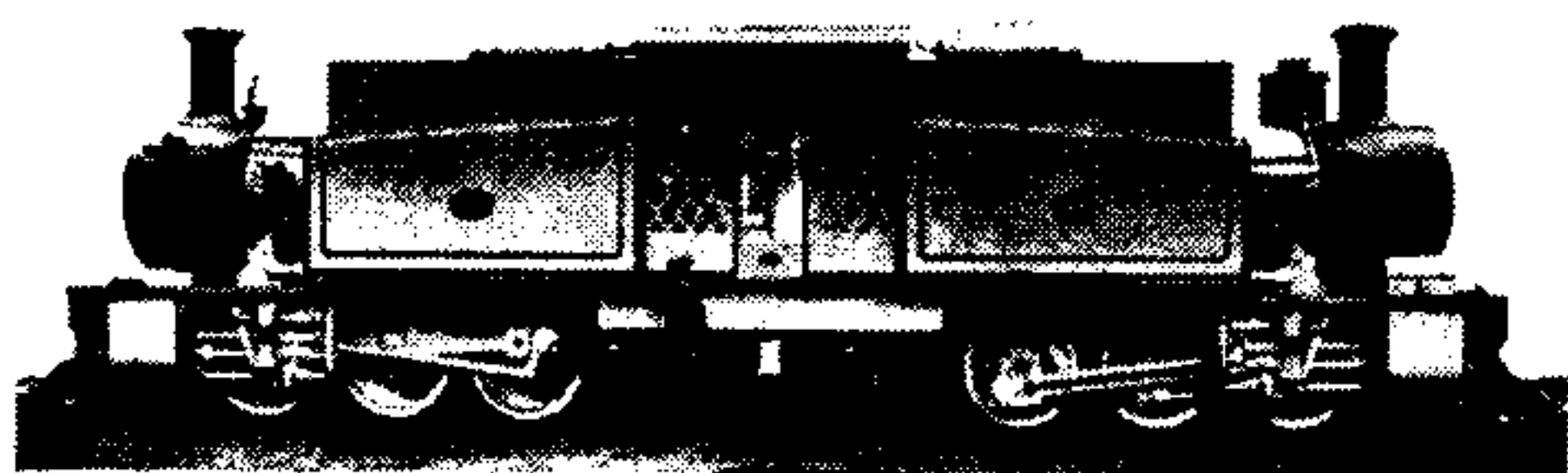
Rosa still hasn't bothered to acknowledge receipt of their letter. But on 26 January Brussels issued an amendment to the original regulation which the lawyers fear may give Defra the power to do with the money whatever it likes. In other words, having been caught breaking the law, Defra may have been retrospectively let off the hook by its friends in Brussels, making a mockery of the original purpose of the dairy premium and leaving England's dairy farmers £600m the poorer. But they are still expected to compete with their Scots, Welsh, Irish and other EU counterparts, who will receive the special dairy subsidy as planned. Yet another nice one, Mrs Beckett.

'Muckspreader'

**Number**  
**£1.5m**  
■ Annual cost of *The Sharp End*, a glossy 'lad's mag-style' magazine for police, produced for the home office by private contractor Square One and described by cops as "insulting and patronising"

**£1.5m**  
■ Annual salary cost of 67 new police constables

**crunching**



## SIGNAL FAILURES

### Grim up north

**"NEW"** Labour has decided that people in the north and Midlands don't deserve good train services. It's using the railways bill, being hurriedly passed before the election, to strip England's passenger transport executives (PTEs) of their say in future franchises.

The PTEs cover city regions, are accountable to elected councillors and have provided successful transport schemes. But ministers and civil servants in London have believed for decades that trains not serving London are a waste of money. Their image of a commuter train is based on the ones they ride to central London

each day. Commuter trains into Manchester or Sheffield reflect lower population and affluence and so carry fewer people and need more subsidy per passenger.

PTEs were created in 1968 to protect regional networks from post-Beeching cuts by blinkered London bureaucrats. Now those bureaucrats are on top and control of English rail is about to pass to the transport department, under Alistair Darling, a minister from Scotland (where rail is devolved and developing: see Eyes passim).

Stripping England's PTEs of rail powers makes eroding regional rail easier. The railways bill also makes closing stations easier and reverses recent legislation requiring official action to promote rail use. Already Labour is attacking local services in the West Midlands, where passengers have risen 20 percent in three years, to make way for London-bound Virgin expresses whose passenger miles fell 18 percent in the five years to 2004.

The truth about Labour's plans emerged in a Lords debate during which peers forced government transport spokesman Lord Davies of Oldham to explain. He said the PTEs had used

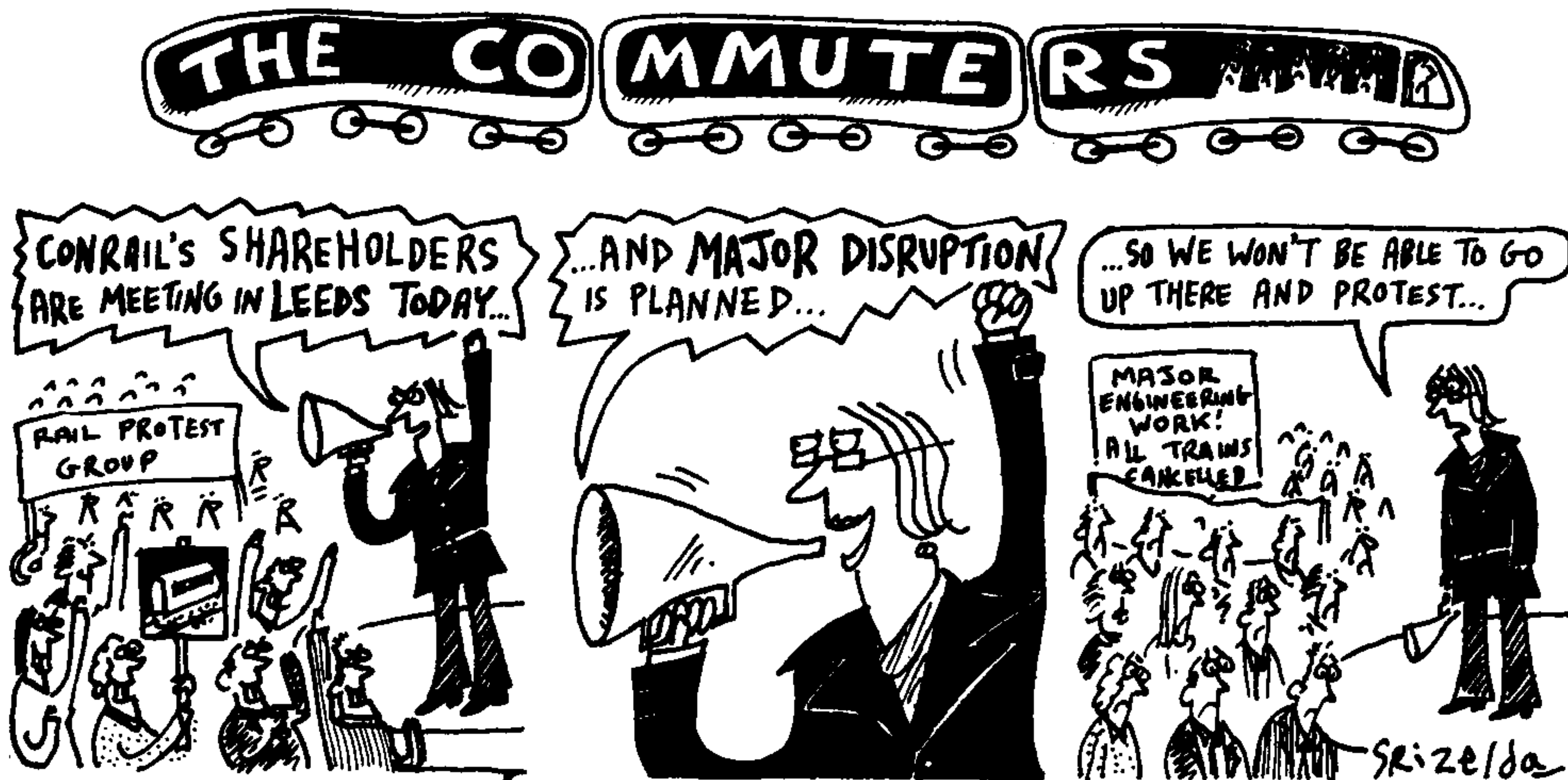
their rail powers to delay new franchises, pushing up costs. Perhaps he meant the PTEs' refusal in the 1990s to accept cuts because privatisation had inflated costs nearly 400 percent overnight (Eye 1101). The PTEs forced the Tories, desperate to franchise everything before Labour took over, to fund all existing services.

Davies also accused PTEs of securing improvements without paying their share of the costs. In fact they've always been willing to spend money raised from local council tax to improve public transport. Last year the West Midlands' PTE funded extra rolling stock with no help from government.

"The PTEs are able to specify the level of services, fares and quality of stations and services in their areas," grumbled Davies. He also criticised West Yorkshire's PTE for bringing in "new and expensive rolling stock... rather than allowing replacement rolling stock which could have been used". In fact those new trains were delayed several years by privatisation (Eye 891). Meanwhile the newly-electrified commuter lines from Bradford and Skipton to Leeds relied on "replacement rolling stock" of the type Lord Davies thinks is good enough for Yorkshire folk – 35-year-old trains which were destined for the scrapheap from London and were so dire that three of them exploded and two caught fire. Under the ludicrous leasing system, those decrepit trains cost almost as much to lease as new ones would. So the PTE, using the powers it will soon lose, insisted on new trains before the region's first franchise was signed.

Those new trains carry 75 percent of commuters into Leeds on the main corridor they serve, easing road congestion and aiding the region's economy. Other routes cry out for upgrades; overall commuter trains into Leeds, for example, are more overcrowded than those into London. But Labour is ensuring that instead of getting investment to become more effective, many regional routes will wither, be replaced by buses or see massive fares rises designed to force the poor off the trains.

'Dr B. Ching'



## ■ ROTTEN BOROUGH ■

### DUST TO DUST

**A** PLANNING application to build 650 houses and a children's nursery on the site of the world's largest asbestos textile factory has been put on hold after an *Eye* investigation discovered that – surprise, surprise – the site was badly contaminated with deadly asbestos dust.

Asbestos produced at Turner and Newall's former factory at Rochdale, Lancashire, has killed hundreds of workers and residents over the last century. Victims have received very little compensation for fatal lung diseases that T&N knew as early as the 1930s were caused by exposure to asbestos.

Last year a consortium consisting of the "regeneration specialists" Countryside Properties plc, Rathbone Jersey Ltd and MMC Development bought the land from the administrators of T&N, which in April 2004 admitted: "Our priority has been to turn an asset of dubious value (possibly even a liability) into cash."

Aware of the 72-acre site's reputation, Countryside employed a firm called Development Planning Partnership (DPP) to complete an environmental impact assessment before submitting its planning application to Rochdale metropolitan borough council. As T&N's former land agents, could anyone have been better suited for the job? DPP's report reassuringly concluded that "...overall, the current site investigation works have determined little significant contamination... of particular note is the absence of any asbestos contamination". [Our italics].

This is at variance, to say the least, with evidence obtained by the *Eye*. Earlier this month we filmed workmen employed by private asbestos removal contractors Ellis Insulation roping together bags filled with asbestos dug out from the ground and dragging them up a slope less than 100 yards from where the developers plan to start building. The workmen were not wearing protective masks, and had their protective suits unbuttoned as they handled the plastic sacks clearly marked "asbestos".

In September 2004 several trees on the site were blown down in a storm, revealing roots caked with asbestos. A local residents group called Save Spodden Valley sent samples for independent tests, which revealed raw brown asbestos [Amosite] on the tree roots.

DPP's report also failed to account for the thousands of tonnes of asbestos that were tipped on the area by the factory over its 115-year history. A T&N document from 1957 states that extracted dust from the filter room alone accounted for 15,000lbs *per week* of dust.

Rochdale council did commission a contamination report of its own. "Audits have consistently revealed the presence of asbestos at the surface or in superficial soils," it said. "All three forms of asbestos, Chrysotile [white], Amosite

[brown] and Crocidolite [blue] were found to be present."

But this report was not made public. Protesters had to obtain it under the freedom of information act. Its author, Paul Bradford, the council's contaminated land agent, resigned days after Countryside's application was submitted in December 2004.

The *Eye* has passed a copy of its film to the health and safety executive, which has promised an inquiry. Rochdale council, meanwhile, has put the planning application on hold. A spokesman told the *Eye*: "There are some issues which need to be properly addressed before the application can be progressed... [we have] requested additional information [from the developers]... so no further work is being carried out towards bringing the application before committee until the information is received."

Ian Kelly, managing director of Countryside Properties, told the *Eye*: "We are not insensitive to the associated health issues that have historically surrounded this site. We are still gathering information and learning about this site and we expect the initial assessment alone to take six months."

All of which suggests that applying to build 650 homes there was just a bit premature, then.



### MINISTER OF LIES

**I**F, with a general election approaching, an opposition party found its posters ripped down on government orders, its advertisements refused by newspapers, and its spokesmen prevented from booking halls for public meetings, there would be an outcry.

But this is exactly what is happening to defenders of council housing around Britain who want to campaign on an equal footing with the forces in

favour of privatisation as local councils ballot their tenants over "stock transfers".

In Lambeth, south London, where the council is controlled by a Tory-Lib Dem coalition, a proposal to sell the Clapham Park estate to Clapham Park Homes, a subsidiary of the Metropolitan Housing Group, would see half the existing council flats demolished and 1,428 expensive private flats built at a cost of £560m – all to raise the £28m required to have improvements done to bring the remaining social housing up to the government's "decent homes standard". So far £2.5m has been spent on the campaign to persuade tenants to vote for the stock transfer.

Lending his support for the transfer is local MP Keith Hill, who also happens to be housing minister. In 2003 he declared: "The law is entirely clear. Tenants need to be presented with equal information about the pros and cons of the various options for which they are being consulted. That is absolutely the principle that we as government and we as ministers conform to."

Fine words... but a blatant lie. Opponents of the transfer have alleged intimidation and abuse by board members and staff employed by the Clapham Park Project (the quango administering the transfer). The use of a "converted sports bag", with no secure lock as a ballot box in the show flat on the estate has cast doubt on the robustness and integrity of the democratic process. And tenants also received a newsletter from the so-called "Clapham Park Independent Stock Transfer Campaign". It included an article smearing the "No" campaigners as "pagans and racists... squatters and illegal occupiers..." No contact details were given, despite the fact that CPP staff were seen distributing it. Meanwhile locks on tenants' noticeboards were changed to prevent anti-transfer literature being displayed.

Across the river in Labour-run Tower Hamlets, where a similar series of ballots are taking place, housing manager Terry Damiano has instructed his staff to take down any "Vote No" posters they see on estates. In both boroughs bookings of public halls by "No" campaigners have been denied or cancelled at last minute.

With privatisation of the nation's council housing being ideologically driven by the government, big profits to be made by developers, and council housing managers salivating at the prospect of fat private sector salaries, it looks like democracy will be the first thing to go under the ball and chain.

### LEVELLING THE PLAYING FIELDS

**P**LAYING fields that have hosted Highland Games are the next to be swallowed up by the Scottish Executive's public private partnership scheme to build new schools.

A new £20m Roman Catholic school is to be built on the Laighdykes playing fields in Saltcoats, Ayrshire, replacing two other schools in the area. The deprived towns of Saltcoats and Ardrossan are already short of the recommended playing field area for their populations. Previous events at the fields have included highland dancing contests and "heavy events" such as caber tossing.

Locals have marched in protest, petitioned and held meetings, but all to no avail. The land is key to North Ayrshire council's PPP deal to build four new schools by 2007. The Scottish Executive agrees that the deal must go ahead.

The remaining fields at Laighdykes are going to be turned into two synthetic, floodlit sports pitches "following consultation with SportScotland"; but as locals point out, there will be a charge to use them whereas the current fields are free to use, accessible all the time and can be used for a variety of activities.

Last year South Ayrshire grabbed the Old Racecourse Fields, home to dozens of sports clubs, to create an attractive package for PPP investors (*Eye* 1102). In early March, the planning committee rejected its own council's plans after one Labour member had to declare an interest in the decision and couldn't vote. However, council leaders have since pledged that the school will go ahead come hell or high water.

### IT'S GRIM UP NORTH LONDON

### KNIFE & PACKER



# NOOKS and CORNERS

**D**ESPERATE to improve their images, the once industrial cities of Liverpool, Bradford, Manchester and Newcastle did their best in the 1960s to wipe out the past through redevelopment.

We all know what happened and hoped that lessons had been learned and that the surviving legacy of the Victorians was now being looked after. But no: they want to do it all again, this time in the vain hope that "iconic" buildings and "visionary" masterplans will produce the elusive "Bilbao Effect" and lead to economic revitalisation.

How else to account for the revival of the flagging career of Will Alsop, architect of the abandoned, gratuitous "Fourth Grace" in Liverpool? This posturing buffoon is now striding about the north suggesting blobs on stilts here and multi-coloured shoeboxes there as he scatters visionary masterplans that are seized upon by gullible councillors.

Alsop advocates a continuous city from Liverpool to Hull. In Middlesbrough, depressed and desperate, he has unveiled a £500m redevelopment scheme for Tees Valley Regeneration to transform the riverside Middlehaven area. There are to be "apartment blocks shaped like Prada skirts... a shimmering multi-storey hotel that mimics a giant champagne bottle... a giant Space Invader-inspired Museum of Digital Art..." Need I go on?

The subtlety of the approach to urbanism displayed by Alsop Architects was well expressed by Will himself: "When we arrived in the Tees Valley, we knew very little about the region except that it had provided the inspiration for Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* film... Our response emerged quickly – we would create a beautiful landscape for Middlehaven – a landscape fit for the 21st century and inhabited by 21st century icons – extraordinary objects sitting proudly in a new and extraordinary landscape." Poor old Middlesbrough.

Meanwhile Bradford, which once had a proud, no-nonsense character of its own, is also the subject of a visionary masterplan by Alsop, commissioned by Bradford Centre Regeneration.

A lake "in the shape of a giant speech bubble" is to be sunk in the centre of Bradford "to help revamp the city's image". This will mean that the splendid Victorian Gothic city hall will now stand on a promontory surrounded by water, detached from the urban fabric of which it was designed to be a part. Elsewhere round this gratuitous water feature, buildings on stilts will

thrust forward. Alsop explains: "In Bradford the imperative is to differentiate itself from Leeds" – so Bradford has been cut up into an imaginary grid and "each square... will have something of significance in it which might range from a building to an artwork to a public open space or a combination of all three."

The people of Bradford don't seem particularly enamoured of the lake; and while they are happy to see some 1960s buildings go, they are opposed to the proposed demolition of the former New Victoria cinema. Designed by William Illingworth with its vaguely Alhambra-like domes and built in 1929-30, the cinema was subdivided as an Odeon in 1969 and closed in 2000. The city council wants it to go, but as it is structurally sound and as it is not to be submerged by Mr Alsop's lake, there seems no reason it should not survive. After all, as Bradford is the home of the National Museum of Photography, Film and Television, there is a good case for restoring its once-splendid interior and using it for cinema again. Or is it just that Alsop cannot bear to have a popular old iconic building survive to compete with his own?

*AND what of Liverpool now that Alsop's "Fourth Grace" – that multicoloured "Cloud" or blob on stilts – has been abandoned?*

*As European City of Culture in 2008, the city council could not bear to lose the chance of an "icon" and has commissioned the Danish*

*architects 3XN to build a new Museum of Liverpool in front of Pierhead by the river Mersey.*

*The perspective of this exciting project, which I illustrate, is interesting as it fails to show the restored Albert Dock, containing the Merseyside Maritime Museum, which*

*stands right behind. This new museum is to be five times as big as the existing museum in the city centre, but don't ask what's going to be in it or why one of Liverpool's magnificent redundant buildings wasn't used. "It's an open, democratic structure more than a building," say the architects. In other words, it's an icon.*

PS. IF YOU really want to understand the pernicious cult of the superstar architect and the promotion of iconic buildings – why people like John Prescott think the chief aim of architecture is "the wow factor" – read *The Last Icons. Architecture beyond Modernism* by Miles Glendinning.

'Piloti'

## I-SPY Cirencester



Submitted by Rob Wilson. £10 paid for similar submissions. (SAE required for return of photographs)

## MUSIC & MUSICIANS

**THE Rt Rev Richard Holloway, ex-Bishop of Edinburgh, is throwing himself into his new role as chairman of the Scottish Arts Council with gusto, stoutly defending the national opera company.**

The bishop naturally has something of a spiritual agenda, arguing for an alliance between the church (which has a lot of under-used decaying properties) and the arts (which are persistently in accommodation). More pointedly he's been pursuing the Scottish Executive, whose failure to address the financial problems of Scottish Opera has dragged on for years.

It was recently revealed, courtesy of the freedom of information act, that a report commissioned from Sir Peter Jonas in 2001 warned the executive of dire consequences for the company if something wasn't done. Nothing was done; and Scottish Opera is now more than £4m in debt, its season is cut to the quick and its chorus has been reduced to a pitiful 20 – who will anyway be laid off in June when the company goes dark for nine months with no running repertoire of full-scale stagings.

As a final indignity it has been forced to surrender control of its own home, the Glasgow Theatre Royal, to a commercial operator, the Ambassador Theatre Group, from whom it will now rent what was formerly its own bricks and mortar for £20,000 a week. In the short term, desperate to save running costs, this was the only thing the company could do. In the long term it's a recipe for disaster.

That this has been allowed to happen is an international disgrace that the executive will never live down. Scotland has become the cultural laughing stock of Europe: famous for the fact, as Bishop Holloway says, that its ministers fall over themselves to be photographed with footballers but run a mile from any artist.

Scottish Opera meanwhile does its best to wear a brave-ish face. Chief executive Christopher Barron promises that when the company reopens in April 2006 it will have cleared its debts. And the company's website looks relatively cheerful – until you click through to the page marked *Vacancies*. It simply says: "We have no vacancies." Only redundancies.

'Lunchtime O'Boulez'

6.29 Talking Scotland Issues of importance. (S) 286715  
6.30 News; Weather (S) (T) 13

The Herald, Edinburgh

## YOUNG BRITISH ARTISTS

BY BIRCH



## AD NAUSEAM



**EYE 1125** told of the furore caused by a fake online viral ad for the VW Polo, created by a maverick creative team called Lee and Dan, that showed a suicide bomber blowing himself up outside a restaurant.

VW and its agency DDB London quickly distanced themselves from the ad, although it was suggested here that despite universal condemnation of the spoof, "everyone in adland loves this stuff" and there was no better way for aspirant creatives to get a job.

Last week Lee and Dan were given jobs at the ad agency Quiet Storm. The fake VW ad was part of their reel.

**TESTING** times in the run-up to the election for Labour's advertising agency, TBWA/London.

It has been losing business hand over fist in the opening months of the year, with first Abbey National putting its £22m account up for pitch, and then News International pulling its £20m *Sun* and *News of the World* accounts. This on top of the widely-derided FCUK campaign, which is seen as being partially to blame for French Connection's plummeting sales, not to mention the whole Michael Howard as Fagin poster snafu.

**PROOF** that advertising regulation really works...

In August 2002 Pot Noodle's "Slag of All Snacks" slogan was banned from all its advertising. Suitably chastened, Pot Noodle's latest TV campaign uses the strapline "Have You Got the Pot Noodle Horn?" and features a man with what looks like an erection. So far the ASA has received 65 complaints.

## CURSE OF MANDELSON

**December 2001:** The *Daily Telegraph* appoints new advertising agency Clemmow Hornby Inge, with one P. Mandelson as a director and consultant.

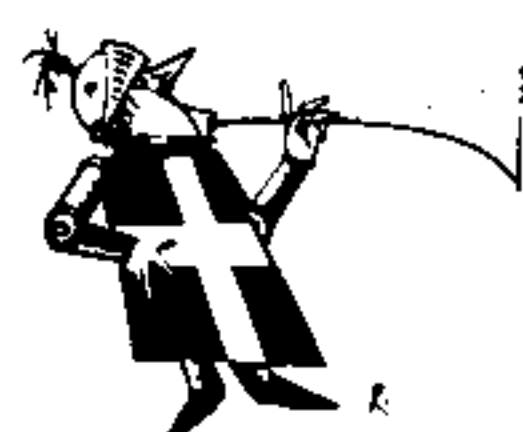
**March 2003:** The £8m "Read a Bestseller Everyday" campaign finally emerges and is dubbed "the ripest of turkeys" by *Private Eye*.

**2003-4:** The *Telegraph* becomes less of a bestseller everyday.

**December 2004:** The *Telegraph* culls its marketing director and commercial director.

**January 2005:** The *Telegraph* drops the Bestseller campaign and axes 17 percent of its workforce.

**February 2005:** The *Telegraph* axes its brand marketing altogether.



## EYE TOLD YOU SO

"After a month of intensive explanatory advertising, hands up who has the slightest clue what number to call for directory inquiries? Hats off to adland for making the issue as unclear as it possibly could be." — **Eye 1080, 16/05/03.**

"The number of calls to directory inquiry services has slumped by 30 percent since the old 192 number was privatised two years ago... Despite a barrage of marketing activity, consumers are still confused about the range and availability of 118 services." — **Guardian, 18/03/05.**



## Letters

Private Eye

### Strong wards

Sir,

*M.D.'s weekly rant is called Doing The Rounds but his snooty piece on the British Association of Endocrine Surgeons (BAES) audit (Eye 1128, p10) suggests he hasn't been in the wards much lately to understand how healthcare works, or else simply couldn't be bothered to think the issue through or get his facts right.*

*The BAES exists to try to improve the standards of thyroid and other endocrine surgery. The audit he reports was carried out by the association itself (not by the Royal College of Surgeons as M.D. claims) and was a first attempt to find out what happens around the country. M.D. ought to know that you get a fuller and more accurate return if that sort of audit is anonymised.*

*Even so, it was not all that accurate as the low numbers of ops reported by some surgeons probably reflects simply failure to send in audit returns for all cases. As to chucking "low volume" surgeons out of the BAES, that would achieve nothing as they are exactly the people we wish to keep in to ensure they learn how best to look after this sort of patient. The BAES has no power to change the national pattern of who does what operation where, much as it might wish to do so.*

*This audit recorded only nine deaths in 3,622 operations, if M.D. wants to stomp about on the moral high ground, then perhaps he should be encouraging public comparative audits for high risk surgical procedures on the oesophagus, pancreas, colon, larynx, aorta etc where the data shows that low volume surgery is associated with significantly higher death rates. Don't knock the BAES, at least it is trying to do something constructive in its own patch.*

*Incidentally it's a bit rich to have M.D. criticise anonymity when he (if he is a "he" not a "she") remains anonymous himself!*

TONY YOUNG,

President, BAES.

### Lookalike



Butt-head



Letwin

Sir,

*Watching his televised response to the budget, we were struck by the startling resemblance between Oliver Letwin and Butt-head of Beavis and Butt-head. Are they by any chance related? We think we should huh-huh huh-huh be told.*

HEATHER AND STEVEN CURTIS,

Coventry

### Grim reality

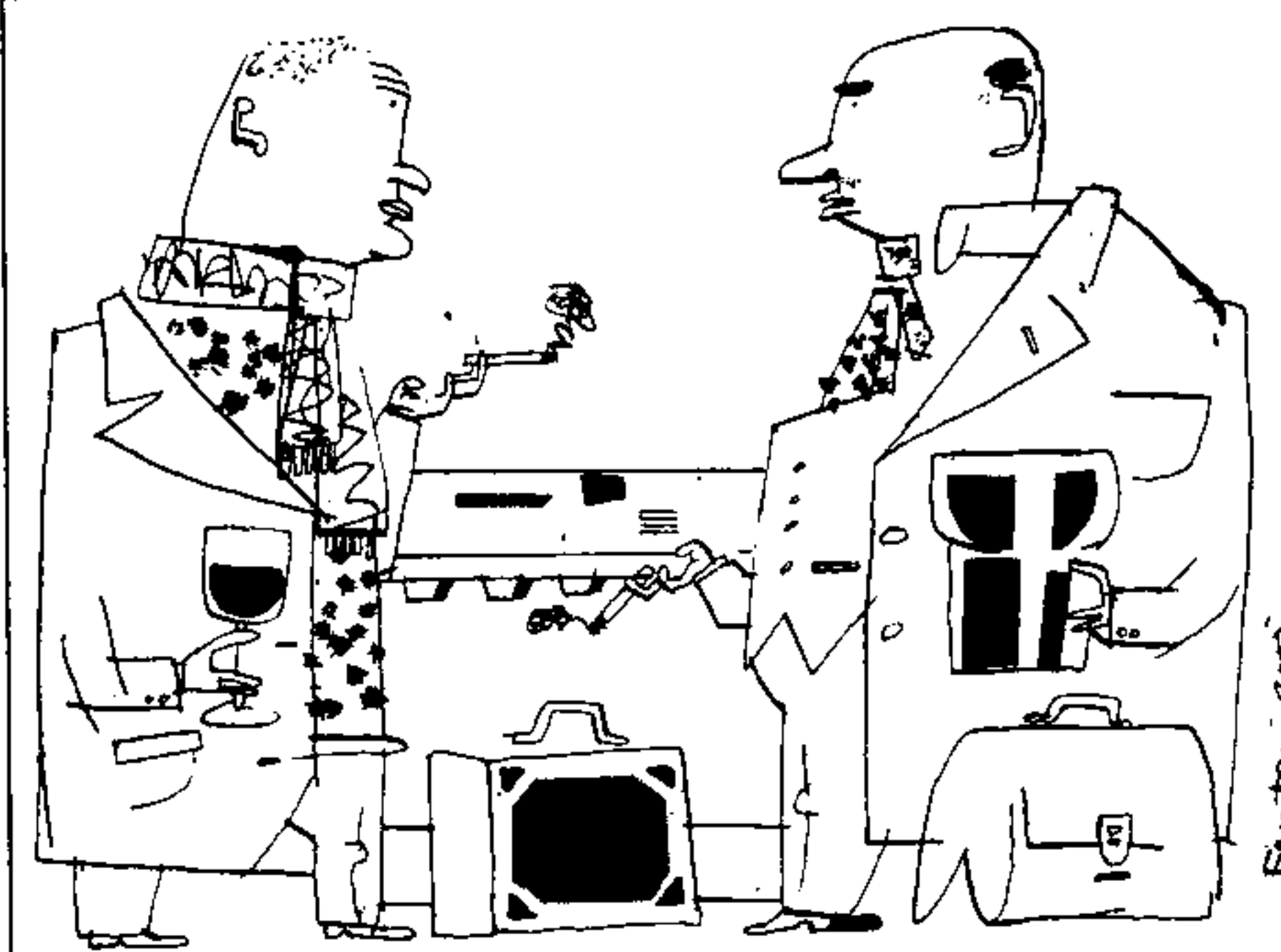
Sir,

*I'm sure you're being drowned in a Ganga of letters from other indologist pedants, but may I humbly point out that, as any fule kno, the Mahabharata was written in Sanskrit not Hindi (It's Grim Up North London, Eye 1128).*

Yours faithfully,  
JIM MALLINSON,

Via email.

## Scenes You Seldom See



"I was watching BBC Four last night..."

### Creative writing

Sir,

*Nae nepotism, ya bass!*

*My pupils and I are dilated to have made it into your exclusive ophthalmic organ (Eye 1128, p. 24) but the Bookworm piece made me squirm for all the wrong reasons. It contains two complete fictions, so permit me a public "Naw". Neither Alan Bissett nor Sophie Cooke was ever a student on Glasgow University's Creative Writing Masters course, and I was never on the board of the 11/9 imprint. It seems the only thing going badly north of the border is the worm-eaten research of your short-cited source.*

PROFESSOR WILLY MALEY,

Dept of English Literature, University of Glasgow.

### Dumb struck

Sir,

*Scientific ignorance is bliss. Victor Lewis-Smith is a lucky man, because the mere sight of a scientific journal must give him fits of laughter, while we unfortunates who have some vague idea of the actual meaning can't see anything funny at all. I suspect there are many such unfortunates among the readership in relation to his choice of the ESRC Oxford Spring School notice for Funny Old World 1128, since the use of the word "regression" in its statistical sense is far from obscure.*

*Meanwhile, Dumb Britain thinks we might laugh at someone thinking the chemical symbol K stands for kryptonite. Since this fictional substance borrows its name from a real chemical element, krypton, symbol Kr, was it really so dumb?*

IVAN VIEHOFF,

Chalfont St Giles.

### Time for pp

Sir,

*I'd like to nail the pp issue by quoting, verbatim, from the new Fowler's Modern English Usage, revised third edition by R.W. Burchfield published in 1996:*

*"p.p. (or pp) is now widely regarded as an abbreviation of L per pro 'for and on behalf of', and is used against a principal's typed name when his or her secretary or other agent is signing on his behalf. By others it is regarded as an abbreviation of L per procuracionem (hence the abbrev. per proc.) 'through the agency of', in which case it should appear against the signature of the agent or proxy rather than the principal. Though this is without doubt the true origin of the abbreviation, now that Latin is not so widely understood as it was in Fowler's day, per pro is much more usually understood to be the phrase for which p.p. stands."*

*Hope that clears it up.*

Regards,  
pp MAGGIE MIDDLETON  
pp SIMON MIDDLETON,

Via email.

## Baton charge

Sir,  
I am delighted that in Music & Musicians you welcome the appointment of Kathryn McDowell as the LSO's next managing director. I think she will do a great job, and she totally shares the LSO's mission to create the most extraordinary music and make it available to the greatest possible number of people.

LSO St Luke's, the LSO's music education centre, has been central to this mission. We created it to enable the LSO to play the most comprehensive role possible in ensuring that the music we play can be a part of everybody's life. Unlike most dreams, LSO St Luke's is now a reality. I'm sure you will be pleased to hear that, contrary to your report, Ms McDowell will not inherit any problems with the LSO's finances. LSO St Luke's is fully paid for and operating at break-even, well ahead of schedule. The LSO's deficit, incurred over the two years that we raised £17m to create LSO St Luke's, is now covered, again contrary to your report. Whether your contributor believes this or not is immaterial, since it is the facts that matter, LSO ringtones has nothing to do with raising funds. It is fun, and puts classical music at the centre of everyday life. If it makes a little money for the LSO that's fine; if it doesn't that's also fine!

My ABO conference comments about the Arts Council music department revenue funding policy were about the purpose of public funding of the arts and not about the LSO. What I said was that if the Arts Council revenue funding for a sector is based on a standard formula, regardless of what an organisation does or how well it does it, as has been the case for orchestras over the last five years, then the Arts Council will become irrelevant. I added that if such a policy were to exist in other art forms as well, any government would justifiably wonder if there is any point in having an Arts Council at all.

Yours sincerely,  
CLIVE GILLINSON,

Managing Director, LSO.

## Lookalike



Andrew



Max

Sir,  
Have you noticed the resemblance between Prince Andrew and James Max from BBC2's 'The Apprentice'?

WILL FOX,  
South Kensington, London.

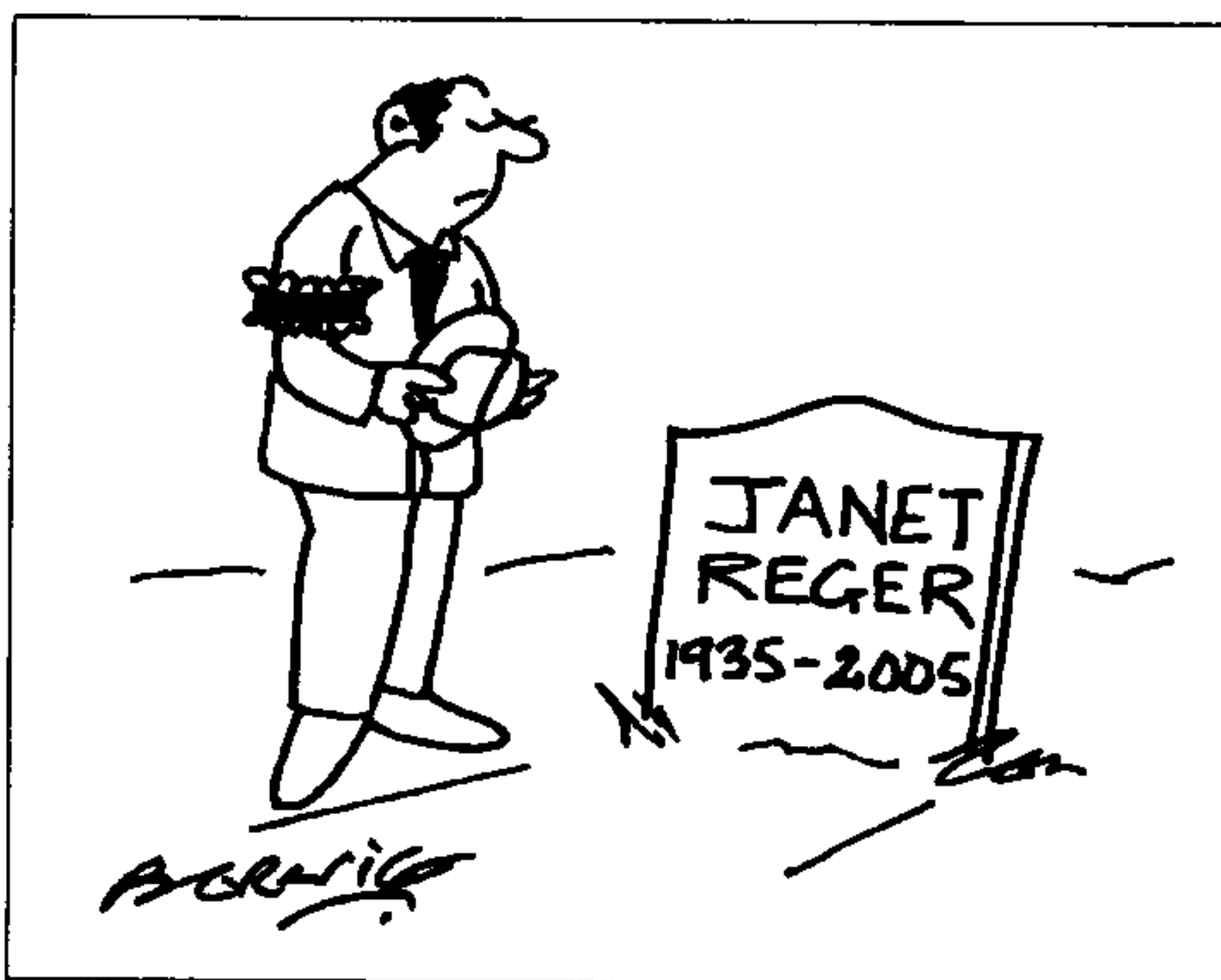
## La donna e mobile phone?

Sir,  
While commending your esteemed organ for reaching towards high-end art in the form of ringtones (Eye 1128, p12), it seems that poor Lunchtime O'Boulez doesn't know his MacMillan from his Eminem.

My company created and delivered the James MacMillan ringtone in question on behalf of Boosey & Hawkes and, contrary to O'Boulez's informant, we have actually seen as near to a stampede as is seemly amongst the respectable classical-going public. In fact, 44 percent of an entire MacMillan audience requested the ringtone to be sent to their mobile phones.

This success means that we are now extending ringtones to other Boosey & Hawkes composers, including well-known swan-fancier Sir Peter Maxwell Davies. Prepare to be educated as well as entertained on your next train journey.

DAVID WARBURTON,  
Chief Executive, The Music Solution.



## Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

"If Oldham are going to get anything out of this game, they've got a battle to climb."

Radio 5 Live  
(Richard Kershaw)

"That's really one of those double-ended sticks..."

LAWRIE SANCHEZ, Radio 5 Live  
(Nick Moss)

"... a few bad results and they are staring down the barrel of the sack."

ANDY TOWNSEND, Talksport  
(John Dryland)

"He [Roy Keane] showed a total lack of disrespect."

JEFF WINTER, Radio 5 Live  
(Benjamin M. Woods)

Old Man: I tried to commit suicide. I took 20 tablets and then called the doctor.

Kim Riley: And you survived?  
BBC Look East  
(Dominic Birch)

## SOLUTIONS

"Loving Links: Quality mid-life dating solutions" – dating agency

"Organic magnify your member solution" – penis enlargement spam email

"Creative Distribution Solutions" – deliveries

"Bright Horizons Family Solutions" – nurseries

"SHL offers people performance solutions across the entire employee lifecycle" – staff training

"Scottish Widows' range of retirement solutions" – pensions

"Pain endurance solutions" – painkillers

"SleepingSolutions.co.uk" – beds

"New Revelation Pentecostal Church: House of Solution" – church

"Grave Solutions: Total Care and Dignity" – burial site maintenance

All submitted by readers

## Ho Ho Hove

Sir,  
Your permanently disgruntled correspondent's observations about the non-fiction section of Hove library (Eye 1127) would certainly not earn a place in that part of the building.

We are not closing the reference section. Like many libraries we are simply combining all reference materials in one room – those non-fiction volumes you can borrow and those you cannot. So, for example, your correspondent could find any "teach yourself journalism" books in one place.

Had anyone bothered checking his notoriously dodgy copy we would have happily put you right. We could have told you the library is getting a £275,000 refurbishment, for example. His "sub-plot" about Hove library subsidising the brilliant new Brighton library we can pop on to an adult fantasy shelf. GCSE revision guides in the new library's young person's section might sort out his problems with maths.

Like many libraries we have indeed disposed of old books nobody wants to borrow and which we cannot sell. In the past we've tried giving them to charity shops as he suggests – and people of your correspondent's rather bleak mindset have complained about that too! If any charities want our old books, do get in touch.

CLLR SUE JOHN,  
Deputy Leader, Brighton & Hove City Council.

● See Literary Review

## Veiled criticism

Sir,  
Regarding the cartoon in Eye 1128, with the caption "You wanted me to dress as a schoolgirl", I take it that you are referring to Shabina Begum's demand to be able to wear a jilbāb in school. A jilbāb is a long cloak-like head-to-toe garment which leaves the face exposed. The lady in the cartoon is in fact wearing a jilbāb with the addition of a niqāb (face veil).

This is not what Miss Begum was demanding the right to wear. Just wanted to clear that up!

Pedantically,  
SAMIRA AL MORRIN,

Via email.

PS: Why don't all correspondents get a free Private Eye pen? I think they should; or can't you afford it?

## HOM SAP



AUSTIN



## Letter from Bangladesh

### from Our Own Correspondent

**G**EORGE GALLOWAY is challenging Labour's Oona King on behalf of the Sir-I-Salute-Your-Indefatigability party (aka Respect) in Bethnal Green and Bow at the general election. To further that end he has been out on the stump... in Bangladesh.



The London borough of Tower Hamlets, which includes the Bethnal Green and Poplar constituencies, has the largest concentration of voters from a Bangladeshi background, mainly Muslim, in the UK. They have always been taken for granted by Labour, but since the Iraq war that has changed. Another Respect candidate, Oli Rahman, who won a seat on Tower Hamlets council last year, will be standing in Poplar at the general election.

During his trip to Bangladesh Galloway told large audiences that Bush and Blair were "the biggest terrorists in the world". If he was elected Tower Hamlets would become "a tower of dignity and respect, its name on the lips of the people of all the countries attacked or threatened by George Bush and Tony Blair". The British government, he claimed, is trying to "re-establish imperialism" in the world. "I feel shame when I see on [the] television screen British soldiers torturing Iraqis."

So far, so predictable. But Galloway said very little about the state of politics in



Bangladesh itself – one of the world's poorest nations, internationally recognised as the most corrupt country in the world, with an appalling human rights record.

Before travelling to

Bangladesh he had given the impression that he would openly challenge Bangladeshi MPs on human rights. He said: "I am not for the Awami League (the left-leaning opposition party), I am not for the BNP (the ruling Bangladesh National Party) and I am not for the Islamists. I am for human rights." He said that he would criticise Bangladeshi politicians, their parties and their "zero sum gain politics".

But this willingness to take on the Bangladeshi political establishment had apparently disappeared by the time Galloway addressed his first press conference in Dhaka. "I work to represent the Bangladeshi community in Tower Hamlets," he said. "I don't want to run the political affairs of Bangladesh – that would be colonialist. I don't want to interfere in the political situation in Bangladesh."

There is plenty in Bangladesh not to interfere with. Two days after Galloway arrived there the US state department published a report on human rights in 196 countries. The section on Bangladesh listed hundreds of serious and widespread abuses at every level, ranging from "politically motivated and extra judicial killings" by the security forces, to child labour, acid attacks on women and religious discrimination.

A day later Amnesty International published a report blaming "agents of the state including police, army and other law enforcement personnel... [for] violations against human rights defenders" in Bangladesh. The fact that most Bangladeshis in east London, whose votes Respect is seeking, support either the Awami League or the Bangladesh National Party, the two groups back home most closely implicated in such abuses, can have had nothing to do with Galloway's silence on the matter.

## FUNNY OLD WORLD

COMPILED BY VICTOR LEWIS-SMITH

● "The hardest thing in business is getting the word out," Joe Tamargo told reporters from his office in Long Island, "and I've always been good at promotion. Tattoos are a great way to tell people about a product, because of the shock value, so I decided to become a human billboard and hire out my skin for advertising. Everywhere I go, people ask 'hey, what's on your arm?' or 'what's on your shoulder?' because everyone is interested in tattoos. It's early days yet, but I really think this could be the next big thing in advertising."

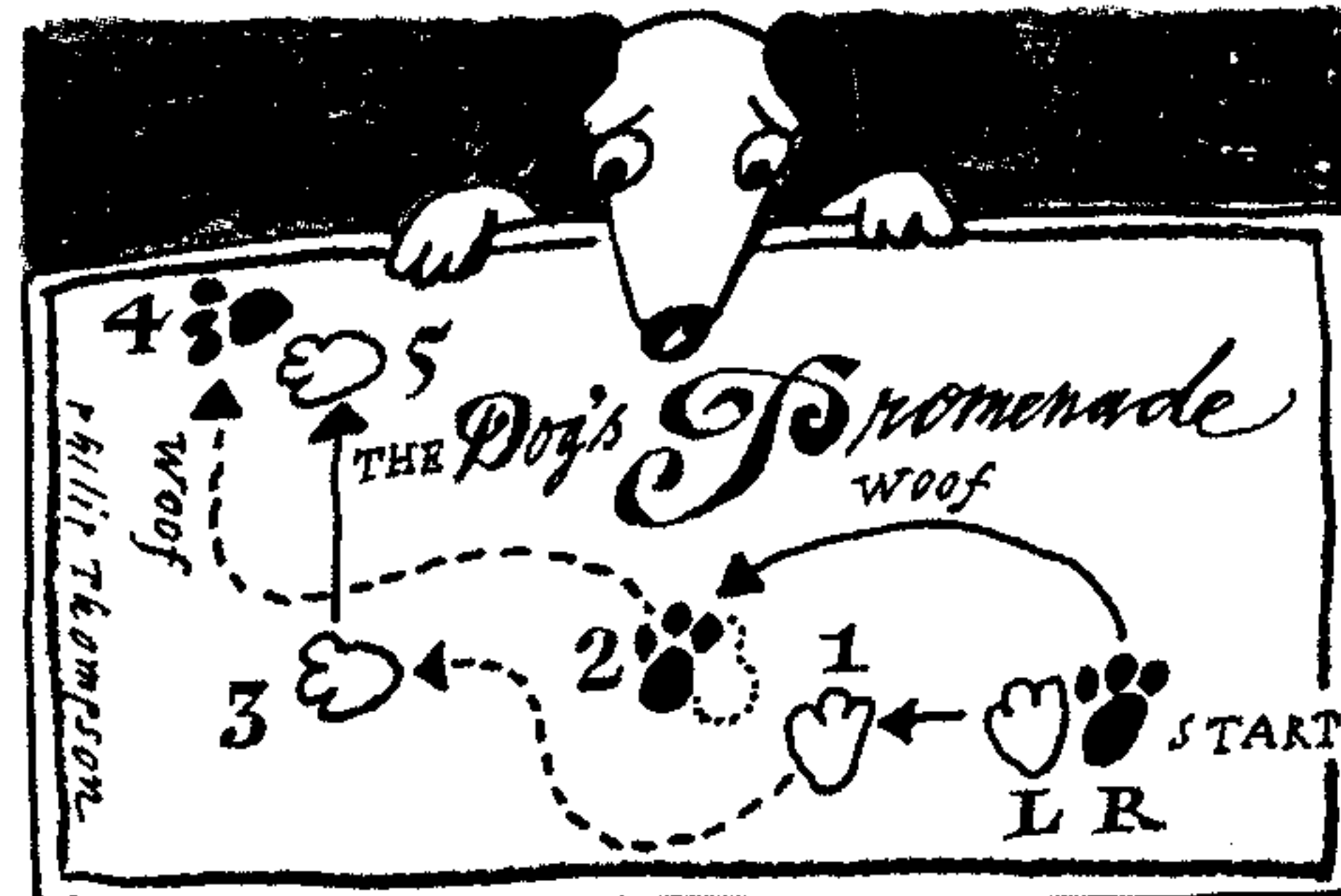
Tamargo was talking about himself and his website, LivingAdSpace.com, which provides advertisers with the opportunity to tattoo their messages onto a human body. "I began by offering sections of my own body on eBay, and requests flooded in. Just last week, a Californian pharmaceutical company paid me \$500 to have 'pildaddy.com' permanently tattooed on my left shoulder, and yesterday I earned \$510 from the Martha Stewart campaign for having 'Save Martha! It's a good thing. SaveMartha.com' on my forearm. Parts of my back, stomach, chest and left leg are still available and, in return, I agree to wear a minimum of clothing at all times, weather and social conditions permitting."

"My original intention was just to market myself, but I've already been contacted by dozens of other people who want to rent out their skin, and I'm now setting up the world's first body art ad agency. So far, I've got 50 people on my books who are willing to carry permanent advertising tattoos, and another 300 who will take temporary ones. It used to be said that word of mouth is the best form of advertising, but I figure that word of skin could be even better. And we're now working with luminous ink, so the world's our oyster." (The Pueblo Chieftain [Colorado], 28/1/05. Spotter Tom Teasdale)

— ● —

● "If you want to dance with your dog, it's important that you go to a proper dog-dancing class," warned Seasaidh Macpharlain from her home in Morant Road, Colchester, "and do not try it at home. Most dogs would love the chance to take part in dancing classes, such as the one

run by the Blackwater Dog Training Centre at Maldon, but our four-legged friends could easily hurt themselves if owners try to get them to dance with them in the living room. The proper training centres that offer these classes are very responsible, and if you are interested in dog dancing they would take every precaution as they show you how to get your partner to stand on their hind legs and perform all manner of moves to music. But some dogs have medical

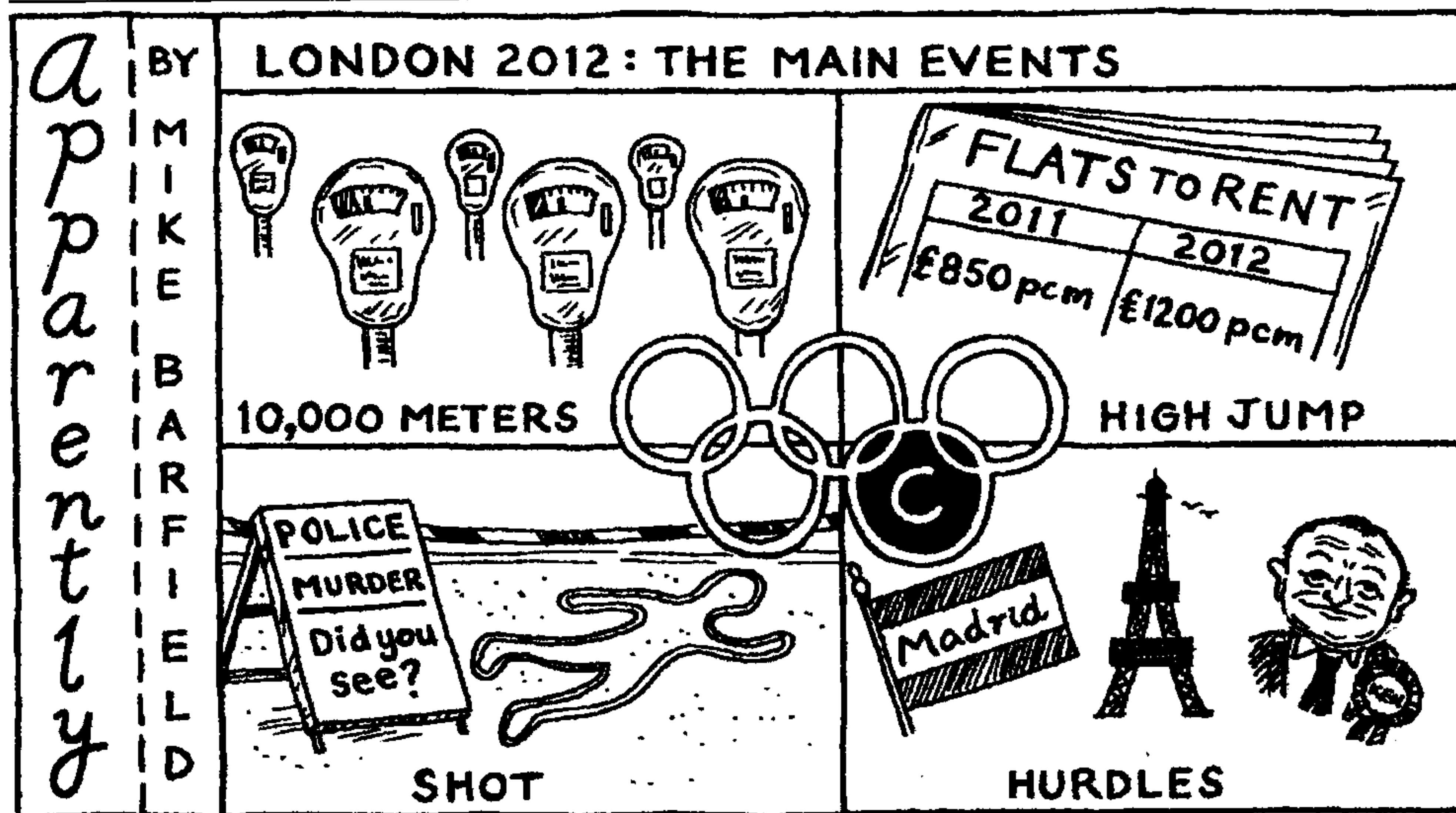


conditions, like my own King Charles Spaniel, so, if you want to try it, go to a proper class, or talk to your vet first." (Maldon & Burnham Standard, 20/1/05. Spotter: Anon)

— ● —

● "Call this a professional pantomime?" asked a furious theatregoer as he and his family stormed out of a performance at the Altmark Theatre in Stendal, near Berlin. "I certainly don't. This was advertised as Snow White and the Seven Dwarves, but what did we see on stage? Only four dwarves, two of whom had pathetic puppets strapped to their backs, and sometimes there's also a normal-sized man on his knees, pretending to be the seventh dwarf. What's going on in there isn't a theatrical production, it's a cheap mockery."

Despite receiving dozens of complaints from disgruntled Christmas audiences, theatre spokeswoman Susanne Kreuzer defended the production. "Christmas is the one time of the year when dwarves are in great demand, and they can almost name their own fee. We are a small theatre, and our budget only enabled us to book four. So we've attached two puppets clad in dwarf costumes to the backs of two of the real dwarves, and the actor who plays the prince sometimes gets onto his knees and joins the end of the line. But he can only do that when he's not playing his lead role so, if children ask us why there are sometimes only six dwarves on the stage, we tell them that the seventh one was stuck down in the mine, working overtime." (Hannoversche Allgemeine Zeitung, 19/1/05. Spotter: Brendan Joseph O'Byrne)



# ST ALBION PARISH NEWS

Incumbent: Rev A.R.P. Blair MA (Oxon)

Hullo!

And I'm sure you were all pleased with the fine weather I brought you over Easter!

Not that I'm claiming to have supernatural powers!

But come on! When your vicar prays for nice sunny weather and then, lo and behold, we have the hottest day of the year – well, you don't have to be a rocket scientist to see that two and two make four, do you? (Note to our treasurer Mr Brown – two and two do still make four, not minus £35 billion as some people around this parish seem to think!)

Anyway I wanted this week, firstly, to congratulate our new curate Mr Milburn on the marvellous job he's been doing, communicating our 'mission statement' to everyone in the parish!

Of course some people have been running Mr Milburn down behind his back, as they sit in the Britannia Arms sipping their 'Newcastle Brown' ales and indulging in negative backstabbing!

They even say that Mr Milburn hasn't got any 'big ideas'!

Well, hullo, how big an idea do you want?

How about these for starters:

- Better quality soap in St Albion's Cottage Hospital.
- Gypsies to be moved on from the churchyard.
- Our local Neighbourhood Watch to increase surveillance on the bus shelter between 6pm and 9pm.

AND (and it's a pretty big AND!) what about the biggest big idea of them all?

What I mean of course is that Number One Topic that we have been focusing on for the past day – namely SCHOOL DINNERS!!!

Yes, when it comes to big ideas, you



can't get much bigger than that.

I think I can hear one of the Sunday School saying that it wasn't exactly my idea!

It was something that famous chef Jamie Oliver was going on about on the telly!

But what is it that the Good Book says? "Great minds think alike" (Proverbs 9.10).

I have never met Mr Oliver, though of course we've all seen him on the screen (and I have long looked on him as a good friend)!

But I'm glad that his views on the importance of school dinners have come to resemble my own so closely!

No, I think we all now realise that feeding young children with the right food is just as important as feeding their minds with the right ideas.

Left to themselves, I'm afraid children would eat chips and vote Conservative!

Which brings me to my seventh and final point this Christmas morning, which is that I have never felt fitter and better equipped to renew my calling to serve you all to the best of my ability – which, I would humbly suggest, is rather greater than that of the various other people who at the moment are going around suggesting that they could do better (namely, those who still think that two and two somehow makes minus £35 billion!).

No offence, Gordon, but like everything else about you, it doesn't quite add up!

Yours,

Tony



The vicar would like to thank everyone who sent him Easter eggs... As seen by local artist Mr de la Nougere

## St. Albion's Primary School

Mrs Kelly has asked me to tell everyone that we should no longer use the derogatory and sexist word 'dinner ladies'. From now the helpers at our primary school should be known as "Catering Solution co-ordinators" TB

## PCC Elections

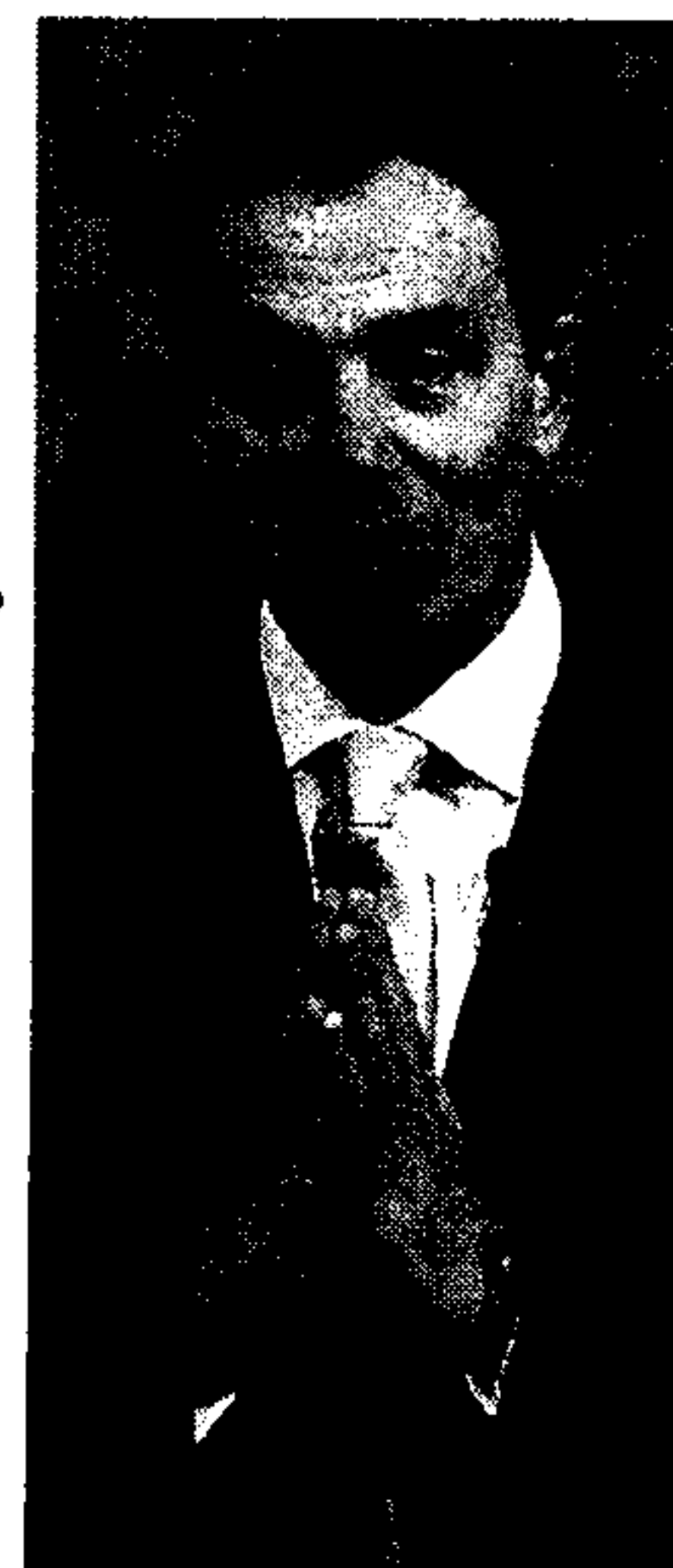
With Easter behind us, the next big date on the calendar is May 5th. So, can I make a special request to all those people who will insist on trying to bring religion into church affairs? Don't!

Surely they must have heard the old expression

"Religion and religion don't mix"?

That's not to say that religion doesn't have its place – anyone who knows the difference between right and wrong will be voting for me – obviously – but we don't want to make a big deal about it in public. We're not like our American friends, such as Reverend Dubya, who is confident in the knowledge that he is doing the Lord's work – just like me.

Rev. Tonya Blair



## The Seven Deadly Sins

### No.8. Apathy

There is no sin more deadly than apathy, from the Greek *apatheos* meaning a pathetic failure to go out and vote for the vicar in the parish elections.

It's all too easy to think that one person's vote doesn't make any difference, and that it's much easier just to stay at home and watch Dr Who on the television.

Well, we should remember that that was what happened to those "foolish virgins" in the Bible, when they could have been out casting their vote for the party that promised to bring down the price of oil in the supermarket.

And look what happened to them? They all fell over a cliff in the dark, because they didn't have any oil in their lamps to see by!

There's a lesson there for all of us, isn't there? I'm going to think about it while I lie down for a while! TB

## KIDZ CORNER

### Nursery Rhymes Revisited With the Vicar

- There's a hole in my budget,  
Dear Tony, dear Tony.
- There's a hole in my budget  
Dear Tony, a hole.
- Then fix it, dear Gordy, (x3)  
Or you'll get the sack.



Hope you  
enjoy  
singing  
this one,  
kids!

# THAT MISSING PARAGRAPH IN FULL

PRIVATE EYE can exclusively reveal the explosive censored paragraph in Mrs Wilmshurst's sensational resignation letter that once again questions the legality of the invasion of Iraq:

I have decided to resign, as I can no longer tolerate the [REDACTED] of this government which has consistently [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED] again through their teeth.

The Attorney General, Lord Goldsmith, is [REDACTED] a man of

integrity. On the contrary, he has shown he is [REDACTED] capable of telling the truth.

In fact, his pants are on [REDACTED].

As for the Prime Minister, Mr Tony [REDACTED], I have [REDACTED] respect for him. He just does whatever President [REDACTED] tells him.

LAST NIGHT, the government defended the censored passages, saying that legal advice was confidential, especially when it made the Attorney General look like a total [REDACTED]er.

## ME AND MY SPOON

### THIS WEEK



**SIR BOB GELDOP**

**Do spoons play a significant role in your life?**

You should be fokkin' ashamed of yourself, talking about fokkin' spoons when millions of people are fokkin' dying in Africa. What's your paper doing about it, that's what I'd like to fokkin' know...

**Can I ask you next then if you have a favourite spoon?**

What's the fokkin' point of a spoon if you've got no fokkin' food? Have you ever stopped to consider that, you eejit? Jaysus, you people are thick!

**Has anything amusing ever happened to you in connection with a spoon?**

Oh fok it! What am I doing here answering questions about fokkin' spoons? I'm fokkin' off...

Unfortunately the spoon interview had to be cut short at this point due to circumstances beyond our control.

NEXT WEEK: Camilla Parker-Bowles "Me And My Parker and My Bowls".

## Let's Parler EU!

(as told to Kilometres Kington de La Independent)

### Numero 94: Le Diplomacy

**Monsieur Blair:** Ah, Monsieur Chirac! Je suis un tremendous supporter de vous et votre constitution non-Federale!

**Monsieur Chirac (pour c'est lui):** Soddez-vous off, matey! Vous êtes un creep anglais qui supports Bush – un vrai lunatique.

**Monsieur Blair:** Un peu harsh, surement, Jacques?

**Monsieur Chirac:** Pas du tout! Et while nous sommes about it, nous ne vous donnerons pas votre three billion pounds back!

**Monsieur Blair:** Mais c'est unfair! Nous sommes amis, n'est-ce pas?

**Monsieur Chirac:** Je suis in a tremendous rebate! Geddez-vous it? C'est un joke! C'est le famous sense of humour anglais!!

**Monsieur Blair:** Boo hoo hoo!

**Monsieur Chirac:** Ha ha ha!

(To be continued)



"That's not the bouquet, Camilla – those are the guests"

# GLENDASLAGG

## FLEET STREET'S TURKEY TWIZZLER!!



■ **SO POOR** old Becks wants his nippers to be left alone?!? Gawd Almighty?!?! Then why not give them sensible names like Glen or Glenda and stop parading them in front of the paparazzi every time your marriage is on the rocks – i.e. all the time?!?!? Geddit?! Do us a favour, David – why don't you leave us alone?!? Geddit?!?

■ **SHED A TEAR** for poor little Romeo, Brooklyn and the other one ("Cruz" – Sub-Ed)??!?! Why can't the evil paparazzi respect the rights of these little 'uns to a bit of privacy in their lives like anyone else?!? Hang on a minute?!? What am I doing writing about them? I should be ashamed of myself. In fact, I'm going to stop right now?!?!?

**Byeeeeee!!!**

(Come back or you're fired. Ed.)

■ **SO PRINCESS** Beatrice is dyslexic?!? And proud of it! Pull the other one, Fergie?!? Your kid's a thicke – just like her Mum 'n' Dad?!? No offence, Ma'am?!? But I guess it runs in the family. It's the stoopid gene?!? I saw a programme all about it on the telly?!?

**Byeeeeee!!!**

(Come back – you haven't done your 'hats off to Fergie' bit yet. Ed.)

■ **HATS OFF** to Fergie?!? She and brave Princess Beatrice have given hope to millions of mums and daughters who struggle with the problems of dyslexia?!? Good on yer, Ma'am – you're a shining example to us all?!? You may find it hard to believe this but I myself can barely read or write (especially after lunch) and yet I have managed to overcome my handicap and become Fleet Street's Feature Writer of the Year in the 2005 UK Press Awards?!?!?

**Byeeeeee!!!**

(No. Come back – you haven't done the 'Bonk Holiday Hunks' yet. Ed.)

**HERE THEY ARE** – Glenda's Bonk Holiday Hunks:

● **Paul Wolfowitz** – He's running the World Bonk?!? You can put a deposit in my security box any day, Wolfie?!?!?

● **Mark Thompson** – the BBC's top dog! Geddit?!? You can sink your teeth into this gal any day, Wolfie?!?!?

● **James Dyson** – Mr Vacuum Cleaner, stoopid?!? You say you don't need a bag anymore – what? Not even li'l ol' me?!?!? Geddit?!?

**Byeeeeee!!!**

(All right. You really are fired. Ed.)

# THE SUN ASKS IS DR WHO A PAEDO?

## Should we beat him to death?

### Ten Tell-tale Signs

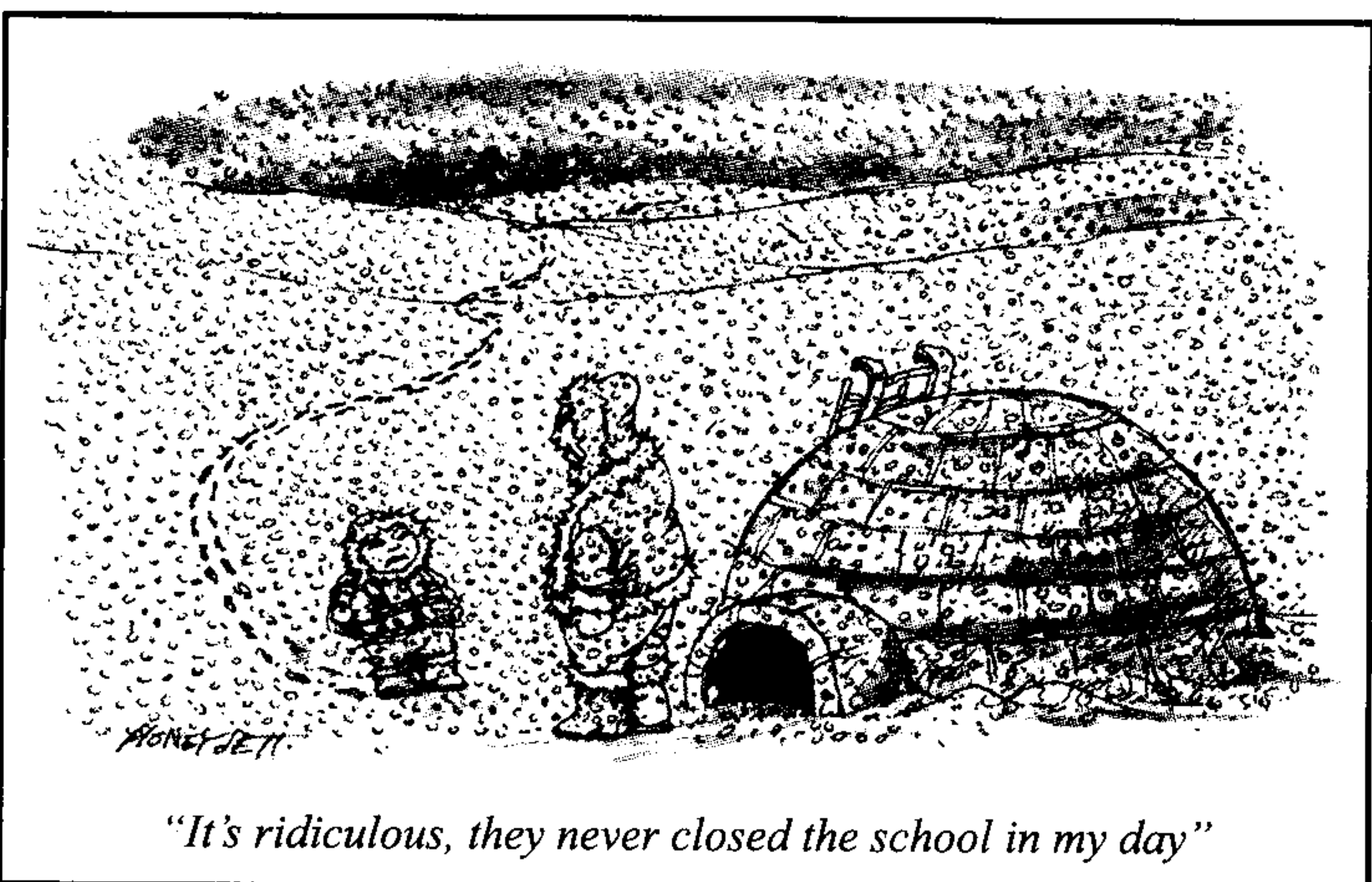
1. Always has "young assistant".
2. Lurks in police call boxes.
3. Keeps talking about his "sonic screwdriver".
4. Tries to appeal to children, but actually scares them.
5. It's obvious, isn't it?
6. Let's get the weirdo!

© Rebekah Wade 2005.

## DALEKS REFUSE TO BE TYPECAST



## BUSH MEETS McCARTNEY FAMILY



Advertisement

# Easter Treat for All the Family! OLIVER!

The classic musical about the little boy who complains about school food and asks "Please sir, can I have some more money?"

Who can forget the tyrannous Mr Blair's outraged response "More? Can't we set up a Food Trust and get OFSTED to look into the issue instead?"

Includes all your favourite songs.



★ Food, Disgusting Food

★ Who Will Fry?

★ I'd Eat Anything

★ Consider Yourself... At Risk

★ You've Got to Eat a Nugget or Two!

★ I'm Reviewing the Whole School Dinner Situation

## Cast in Full

|                         |                |
|-------------------------|----------------|
| Jamie Oliver .....      | Jude Law       |
| Mr Bumble .....         | Tony Blair     |
| The Artful Dodger ..... | Ruth Kelly     |
| Bill Sykes .....        | Charles Clarke |
| Fagin .....             | Margaret Hodge |

# CANNABIS — NEW HEALTH RISK

by Our Medical Staff **Francis Wheed**

**NEW** research into the effects of cannabis has shown that the drug has a more damaging effect on mental health than originally thought.

Tests on the government have shown that cannabis has prompted confusion, muddled thinking and chronic indecision.

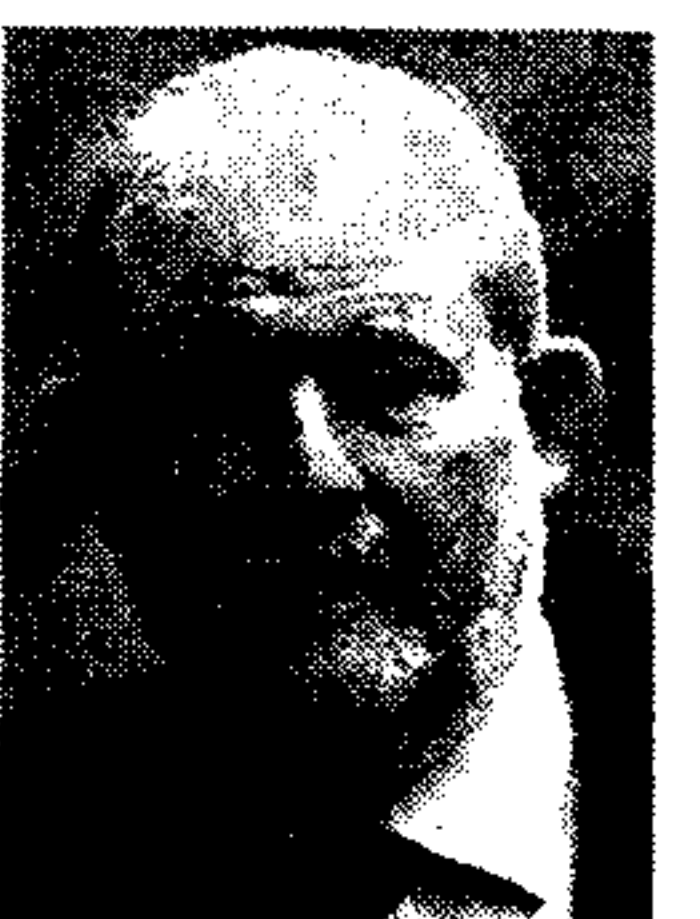
Research indicates that cannabis originally produced laws that were relaxed, mellow

and laid-back.

But with time the laws became stressed, paranoid and aggressive.

Said a government spokesman Mr Charles Clarke, "Like,

hey, chill out, this is no big deal man, I mean, you're under arrest you evil dope fiend."



## POETRY CORNER

In DeLorean (*shurely 'In Memoriam'?* Ed) John DeLorean, Innovative Automobile Manufacturer

So. Farewell

Then John DeLorean,  
Centre of a 1980s'  
Scandal involving  
Taxpayers' money  
And a suitcase of  
Cocaine.

Your car was  
Famous for having  
Wings.

Have you now  
Got wings  
Where you  
Have gone?

E.J. Thribb (17½)

## Film Choice



### DOWNFALL (U)

THE last days of Hitler  
Hastings in which Hitler is  
controversially shown as a  
normal human being, rather  
than just the tyrannical  
monster of history.

Eye Rating: *Heilly enjoyable*



## What Should Camilla Be Known As After Charles Becomes King? YOU DECIDE!

- |                                                    |                                                               |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> The Queen                 | <input type="checkbox"/> The Artist formerly known as Camilla |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Princess Consort          | <input type="checkbox"/> Ellen MacArthur                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lady Diana                | <input type="checkbox"/> Piers Morganatic                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Princess Fiona from Shrek |                                                               |

(That's enough titles. Ed.)

Phone Buckingham Palace now on 0897 345 2345

## NEW WORDS

- |                           |                                                                                                                                                |
|---------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Traveller (noun)</b>   | Person who doesn't go anywhere                                                                                                                 |
| <b>Mobile home (noun)</b> | House that is permanently fixed in one location                                                                                                |
| <b>Campsite (noun)</b>    | Executive Housing Development                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Gypsy (noun)</b>       | Citizen who wishes to reside in a settled community safe from the threat of being uprooted and forced to move elsewhere at irregular intervals |

(That's enough new words. Ed)

## U.S. News in Brief

### RIGHT TO LIFE SHOCK

THE White House today signed into law a bill that means that George Bush will be allowed to remain as U.S. President, despite having been in a persistent vegetative state for the past four years.

"The only way he remains President is because his staff drip-feed him just enough information to make him appear cognitive," said one worried doctor, "but we've been monitoring him this whole time, and there's been no sign of any brain activity whatsoever."

Campaigners have questioned the quality of life of people in Iraq, Syria or any of the countries that America is planning on invading next, while George Bush remains as President.

## WORLD BANK DRAMA

PRESIDENT BUSH has defended his decision to choose Dr Strangelove as the next head of the World Bank.

"Dr Strangelove is wrongly portrayed in some parts of the liberal media as being a neo-conservative warmonger, but this is plainly nonsense. His plans to tackle the problem of Third World debt by nuking any Third World countries who default on their loans is just the solution we've always wanted," insisted a jubilant George W. (cont. p. 94)

## U.K. News in Brief

### ROYAL UPDATE

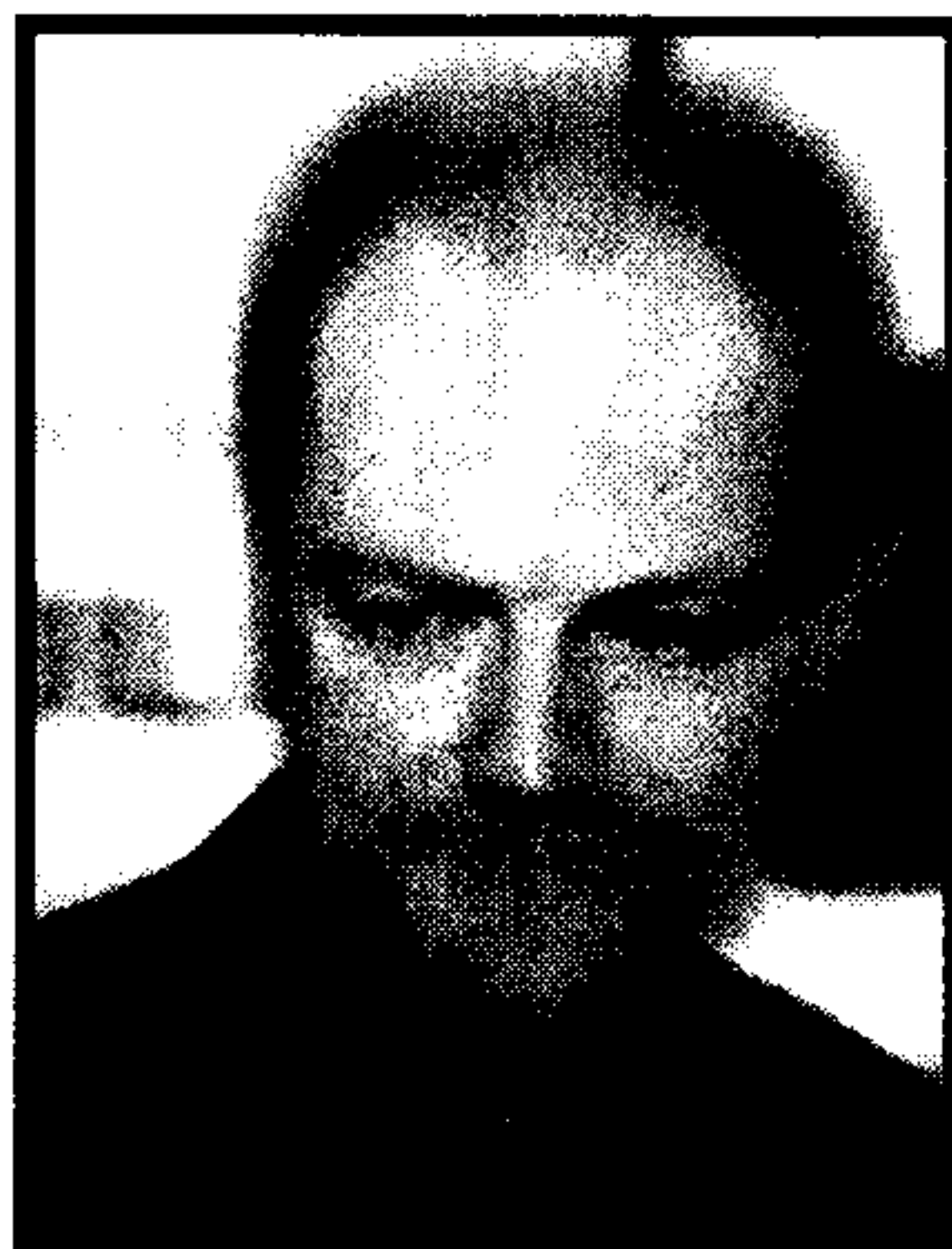
BUCKINGHAM PALACE has confirmed in a written statement that a little-known constitutional clause means that in the event of Prince Charles ascending to the throne he would be known as King.

"We realise this isn't going to be very popular with people but unfortunately it appears there's nothing we can do to stop it happening," said a senior Royal (cont. p. 94)

## the PREMIERSH\*TS



# Is This The Beast Of Wood Lane?



**RESIDENTS of White City have been warned to be on their guard, following several sightings of what one terrified man described as "the director-general of the BBC".**

He is already believed to have struck once, savaging an innocent television journalist in an unprovoked assault which left its victim traumatised.

"I was frightened for my life," he told the Eye. "I sold up and went to live in Rwanda. It's much safer there."

All inhabitants of the White City area have been advised to lock their doors at night and to keep away from the BBC TV Centre where the beast is believed to have his lair.

## Savage Cuts

The RSPCA advised the public "not to approach Mark Thompson under any circumstances and to have a precautionary tetanus injection just in case".

If you think you have seen the beast, contact Jeremy Paxman on [paxocomeoffit@bbc.co.uk](mailto:paxocomeoffit@bbc.co.uk)

# PROTESTS AS TRAVELLERS 'TAKE OVER' NEWSPAPERS

by Our Gypsy Staff **Romany Pelling**

**MIDDLE England was outraged this week as travellers occupied pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and 94 of all British newspapers.**

The travellers moved into the news pages and then began to spread out, taking over the feature pages, the comment section and

even the front page.

"We can't get rid of them," said one reader. "We don't want them here spreading their rubbish and lowering the value of the paper."

Said another, "They have driven out perfectly decent features about celebrities and the Royal Family."

Advertisement

## SAY GOODBYE TO UNWANTED GYPSIES!



More and more people today are waking up to find their lawns and herbaceous borders infested by a plague of "travellers".

Now, thanks to Mr Howard's amazing **GYPOGONE** trouble-some members of the travelling community can be eradicated in seconds.

**Simply Vote Conservative, and - hey presto! - the gyppos have gone and your lawn's as good as new!**

A Michael Howard Instant Remedy,  
in association with the Sun newspaper

# THOSE BIG ELECTION ISSUES IN FULL

- ① Abortion
- ② Gypsies
- ③ School dinners
- ④ Whatever else is in the Daily Mail today
- ⑤ Er...
- ⑥ That's it.

© New Labour/Conservative

# TEN REASONS TO VOTE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT

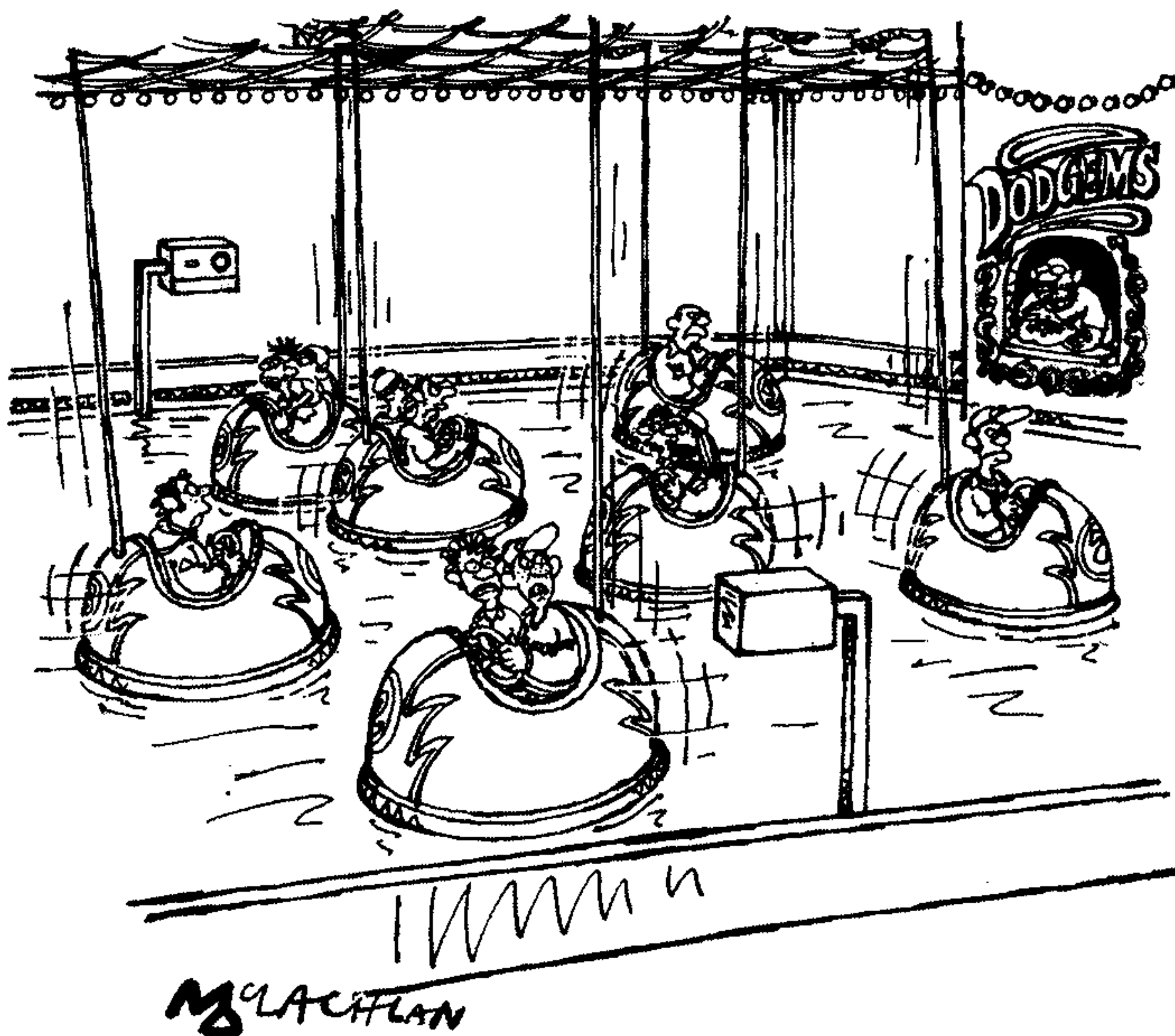
- ① They are not Labour or Conservative
- ② - ⑨ Er...
- ⑩ That's it.

## ELECTION CAMPAIGN SPECIAL

### THIS WEEK'S TALKING POINT

IS IT right to abort Alan Milburn at such a late stage? Should he have been terminated earlier in the campaign when it was obvious he wasn't wanted?

**What do you think?**



# BORN TO BE QUEEN CONSORT

by DAME SYLVIE KRIN, author of *Born To Be Queen*, *La Dame Aux Camillas*, *Heir of Sorrows*, etc.

**THE STORY SO FAR:** *The big day draws ever closer, but there is still much to be done.*

*Now read on...*

**A**LTHOUGH the calendar said it was springtime, there was little sign of it at Highgrove.

Grey skies loomed overhead, and a depressing drizzle obscured the outlines of Charles's new Interfaith Gazebo at the end of the yew-lined Van der Post Memorial Walk.

At a table in the Dimbleby Room, Camilla was leafing disconsolately through the pile of caterers' brochures which Charles had left with her, as he had gone off by helicopter to open the new organic bus-shelter in his beloved Poundbury Village.

'Kutprince Nosh' of Reading, 'Budget Tuck' of Slough, 'All You Can Eton' of Eton. The names stared out from the glossy leaflets as if deliberately mocking her dreams.

Was this all the Royal Family was prepared to pay for, to ensure that the greatest day of Charles's life was one which no one present would ever forget?

From what she had read so far, there was precious little she could offer the 75 distinguished guests for her allocated £6.50 a head.

So far, only Wongs of Windsor had come anywhere near a wedding breakfast on the somewhat limited budget ordained by her future mother-in-law.

Camilla lit a Ross Benson and Hedges Extra-Mild Full Strength, and began reading gloomily down the bill of fare suggested by the oriental purveyors of "nuptial fare for the nobility at a price you can afford", as the proprietor Mr Wong so delicately put it in his accompanying letter.

*Starter: Dim Sum*

*Main: Egg-Fried Rice, Chips and Beans*

*Sweet: Black Forest Gateau.*

She groaned inwardly. How different this was going to be from what she had fondly imagined down the years... The vast banquet hall of Buckingham Palace filled with liveried flunkies dispensing roast swan and finest Roman Abramovich caviare to the thousands of crowned heads from all over the world.

Kings, queens, earls, grand duchesses, all drinking her health, from flutes brimming with Vintage Veuve Twankée

1983 champagne.

How cruelly all those hopes had now been dashed...

**D**ASHED bad news, old thing." A flustered Charles broke into Camilla's reverie, as he entered the Dimbleby Room, clutching the latest sheaf of replies to their wedding invitations.

Camilla steeled herself for what new humiliation might be heaped upon her, in addition to all those she had already had to endure.



Had the Queen decreed that she had to wear a wedding dress from the local Oxfam shop in Windsor High Street?

Would she have to leave for her honeymoon courtesy of Rashid's 24/7 Minicab Service (Heathrow only £40)?

And were her guests only allowed to throw 200 grams of biodegradable confetti-style 'Wedding Shower' under EU health and safety directives?

"Yes, Charles? What is it this time?"

She searched his face for some hint as to what might be the nature of the latest disaster to befall their supposedly 'perfect day'.

"Yes, er, well, it's about one of the family, who can't make it, after all, to our reception thingie."

Camilla's heart sank. At this rate there

would soon be no one there at all.

"Who is it now?" she snapped, preparing herself for the worst.

"Actually, old girl, it's Pater. Apparently, he's discovered this long-standing commitment to... hang on, I'll read it to you."

Charles unfolded the letter, bearing the imposing crest of 'His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh' over his motto 'Semper Furiens'.

*Dear Prince Charles,*

*Thank you for inviting me to your so-called wedding on whatever day it is.*

*Unfortunately, looking at my diary, I see that I've just arranged to spend a few days in Germany around that time, so I shan't be with you.*

*Signed in his absence,  
BRIGADIER RODDY HUNTLEY-PALMER  
(Private Secretary to Prince Philip).*

But Camilla wasn't listening.

"Your father's not coming! That's tremendous news! It's the best thing that's happened for bloody yonks!"

"Is that really how you feel, Cammers?" replied a startled Charles.

"Yes, it bloody well is," she flared, all her frustrations and disappointment over the past few months pouring out in a sudden explosion of emotion.

"Oh, that's amazing," Charles countered, warmly, "because I feel exactly the same way."

Overcome with relief, he instinctively clasped her manfully in his arms, and smiles of unbridled joy suffused both of their beaming faces.

"Oh, Chazza!"

"Oh, thingie!"

"It's going to be a wonderful day after all!"

Their lingering embrace was interrupted by a nervous cough. Sir Alan Fitztightly stood by the open door. Charles turned to face him.

"Er, can't you see I'm sort of, you know, busy?"

The Royal Equerry's face flushed with embarrassment. "I do apologise, sire," he stammered, "but it's just been on the lunchtime news."

"What has, man?" Charles snapped.

"Apparently, it is official. Mrs Parker Bowles will be Queen..."

Hearing these words was like a dream come true. Camilla was enraptured. She repeated the message again, to herself, as if in a trance. "...will be Queen ... Queen ... Queen."

Yes! Now her cup of happiness was not merely full, it positively ranneth over.

Outside, the clouds parted and a ray of brilliant spring sunshine lit up the entire landscape in a dazzling tapestry of golden light.

And was that a distant peal of church bells in the distance?

*(To be continued)*

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EXCLUSIVE TO ALL NEWSPAPERS

# 'THE LOVE OF MY LIFE'

## Blunkett tells all

by Mary-Ann Suckup

**TODAY** (and indeed every other day) the former Home Secretary reveals the innermost secrets of his heart to whichever journalist he happens to run into (or indeed ring up).

"Firstly, I would like to thank everyone in the world for being so wonderfully supportive in my recent terrible ordeal.

"I have had literally millions of letters, cards, and emails, all of them telling me how marvellous I am, and what a raw deal I have had at the hands of the media, and indeed everyone else."

I met the former Home Secretary in his £8 million grace-and-favour Belgravia mansion, where he tells me he is guarded round-the-clock by an elite unit of SAS bodyguards against possible assassination attempts by Osama bin Laden or Kimberly Quinn.

### Blunkett coverage

But tears well up in David's eyes, when the conversation turns to what he calls, frankly, "the love of my life". He is still grieving at their separation, trying to come to terms with the fact that they are no longer together.

"We used to talk to each other many times a day," he says wistfully. "We were absolutely made for each other, Tony and I.

"But now, every day, when I wake up in the morning, I feel sick to the pit of my stomach at the thought that I am not going to see him.

"I just can't believe it's over." As he said this, David brought out an onion and sobbed openly for the



benefit of our photographer.

### Wrong side of the Blunkett

"During those years we were together we gave birth to beautiful policies. But now Tony pretends to the world that they are not mine. It's very hurtful.

"He always used to say that he couldn't live without me. And yet now I have to fight every inch of the way to get access to all the things in this world I hold most dear – power, influence, the chance to appear on the *Today Programme* and my right to return to the Cabinet after the election."

### Security Blunkett

At this point, David's voice fades away into silence, as his assistant appears to tell me, "You've had your ten minutes. It's time for *Woman's Own* now, Mr Blunkett".

His parting words as I left the room were heartfelt. "I wish the media would leave me alone."

**NEXT WEEK: Blunkett tells us more about "The greatest love of my life – myself".**

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# ABORTION LATEST



The Grauniad, Friday April 1 2005

# Blair Attacks Howard Over 'Opportunism'

**Charlie Lee Pot and Martin Kettle**  
Our Political Staff

The Prime Minister has called the leader of the opposition "a blatant opportunist" during a televised visit to a primary school to hand out fresh fruit to toddlers.

"Lovely jubbly!" he told reporters. "Pukka nosh!" Adding, "Michael Howard is a disgrace. All he does is jump on the nearest bandwagon."

At this point, the Prime Minister

broke off to dance with Mrs Margaret Hodge who was dressed as a giant stick of celery.

Mr Blair later told journalists, "Michael Howard is desperately worried about losing the election. In fact, he is so worried that pretty soon he'll be going around calling people Nazis and suggesting that they are worse than Hitler – which, of course, *he is!*"

Tony Blair is 8 (points ahead in the polls).

# KNACKER 'TOO BUSY TO SOLVE CRIME'



"I've got to do all this paperwork..."



"... working out which paper to do another big interview with."



# DIARY

## GEORGE ORWELL

I was born in 1933, the year that the highly regarded author George Orwell published *In and Out of Paris and London*, a highly original and extremely entertaining book.

The two of us never met. Orwell had misfortunately died before I had become the man most sane people hailed as the world's most brilliant publisher.

If only he had taken the trouble to live another few decades, I would have published Orwell brilliantly and his reputation would now be assured. We would have enjoyed many scintillating lunches together, and he would have been envious of my selection of beautiful girlfriends! But it was not to be.

Incidentally, mutual friends have told me that his real name was Eric Blair. I never played tennis with him. This was lucky for him. Close friends regularly compliment me on my tremendous volleys.

## JOHN LENNON

Another person I remember vividly is John Lennon. I published his verse and so put him on the map. Thanks in no small part to myself, his name still means something today.

My view of his verse was that it was highly original and extremely entertaining.

And what of the man himself? Once, when I was going into a room with him, I stood aside and said, "You first." I don't recall whether he replied or not, but I remember he went first, thanks to me, and I followed him in. It was a memorable meeting.

Some years later, John died, I forget how.

## THE TRIUMVIRATE

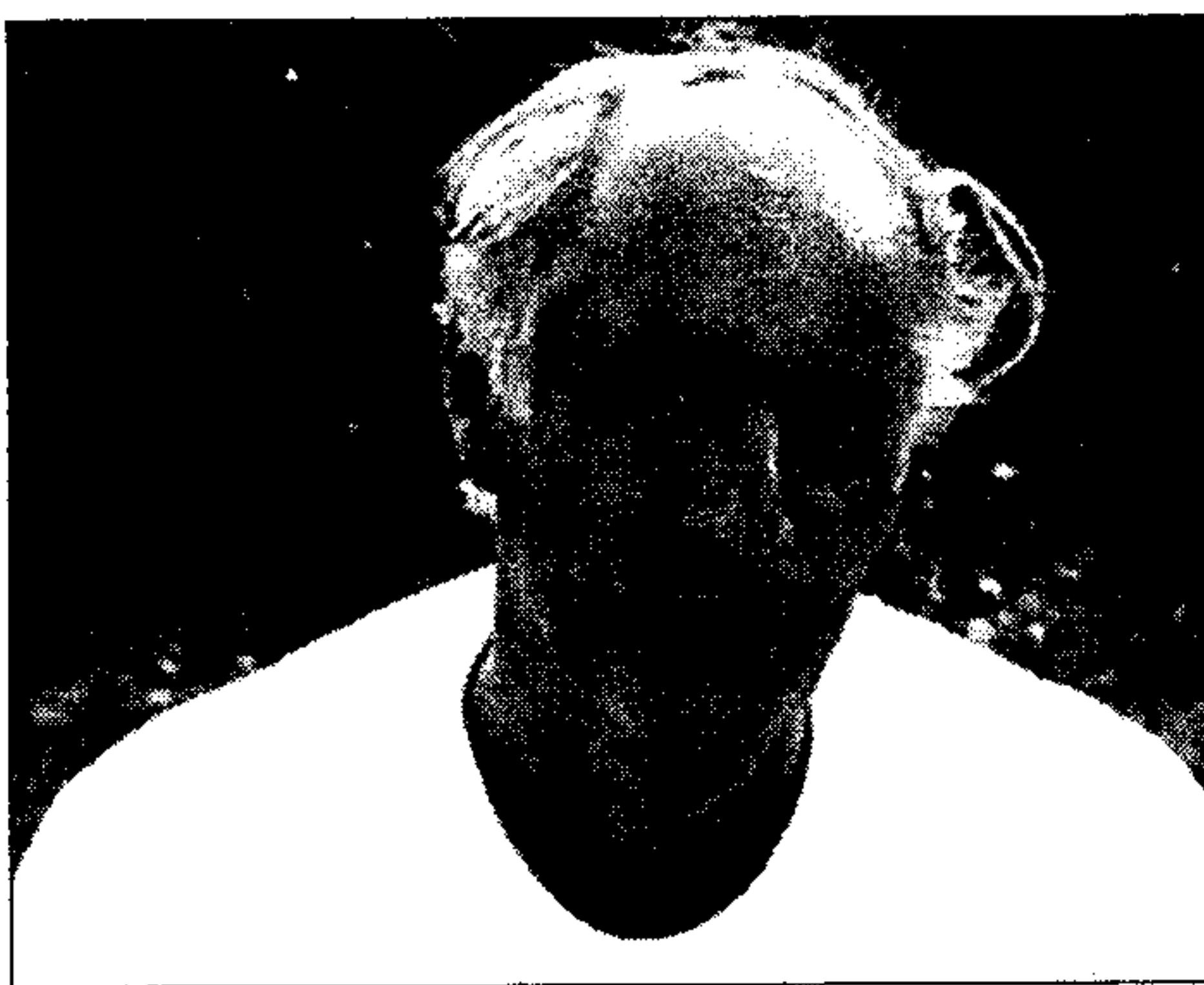
I published Martin Amis, Julian Barnes and Ian McEwan. They all wrote highly original and extremely entertaining books. It is interesting to comparison them.

Of the three, Julian Barnes was the tallest. Martin Amis was the smallest. And Ian McEwan was somewhere in-between.

On the other hand, in strictly alphabetical order, Amis came first. Then came Barnes. And McEwan came last. Unless one was going by their first names.

In that case, McEwan (Ian) would be first, Barnes (Julian) second and Amis (Martin) last.

Who's hair was the darkest? Julian's was certainly the lightest. I now find it hard to recall



TOM MASCHLER

whether Martin's hair was lighter than Ian's. Or if, on the other hand, Ian's hair was lighter than Martin's. My personal guess would be that there was not much in it.

I had many scintillating lunches with each of them (for which, I may add, they pointedly let me pick up the bills, a not inconsiderable expense in those days).

Over lunch, each of them told me time and time again how exceptionally flattered he was to be published by me. They had a high regard for my flair, and for my flares. It would not be true to say that I wrote their books for them.

Far from it. I made it clear from the start that that was their job. Nevertheless, when they won prizes for the books I had published, I was good enough to let them go up onstage to collect them.

As a child, I regularly won prizes for my precocious ability with the ping-pong bat.

## ALEXANDER SOLZHENITSYN

When he met me, Alexander Solzhenitsyn was a Russian novelist with a beard. This he continues to be. I found his novels highly original and extremely entertaining, in their typically Russian way.

We met in a restaurant somewhere. I asked him if he knew Edna O'Brien. Apparently, he did not. So I told him my story of the time I had, after considerable thoughting, decided against publishing her second novel. I then ordered the Poached Quenelles in a Lobster Sauce followed by Hot Shellfish with Olive Oil, Garlic and Lemon Juice. My meal was accompanied by an excellent Pouilly Fume.

Over lunch, I told Alexander of my plans

for bringing some highly regarded names to our non-fiction list and expanding our children's list to include some of the top illustrators in the country. I then confided in him that my good friend Joe Heller had apparently told George Weidenfeld I was the greatest young publisher in the world. "Little does he know" I concluded, "That I am also a wizard at badminton!"

I finished our lunch together by asking Alexander if he would care to join me in a Baked Egg Custard Tart with Nutmeg Ice Cream and Blackcurrant Sauce.

"Would you care to join me in a Baked Egg Custard Tart with Nutmeg Ice Cream and Blackcurrant Sauce?" I said.

He declined. I think the word he used was "No". But he was content to watch as I ate mine. I was saddened that he left me to pay the bill.

## WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Another bearded author was William Shakespeare. Close friends who greatly admired me (and who also knew Arthur Miller) took me to see a play of his, I forget which. I found it highly original and extremely entertaining.

I felt he had the raw talent I could do something with. I set about arranging lunch only to be curtly informed that he was dead. But I had the lunch anyway: Terrine of Ham and Foie Gras, Roast Turbot with Onion Confit, Tartlet of Soft Fruits with a decent Muscadet.

William's absence inevitably meant that, once again, it was me who was forced to pay the bill.

## BRIGITTE BARDOT

I cannot say I got to know Brigitte Bardot as well as she might have liked.

At that stage, I was only recently married. In view of this, I would certainly not have allowed her to take our acquaintance any further, even if she had begged me.

Nevertheless, I found her highly original and extremely entertaining. I retain a vivid memory of her. She was a French actress.

I will never forget our lunch together. It was Zucchini and Saffron Risotto, followed by a Millefeuille of Red Mullet, then a Passion Fruit Terrine. I ate it brilliantly, or so I am informed.

As told to

CRAIG BROWN

Celeb

LIGGER



# Literary Review

## By Phillips Space

### Going Sane

Adam Phillips

(Hamish Hamilton, £14.99)

THE ability of certain prominent persons to get on with their day-jobs in the face of pressing extra-curricular commitments is always a source of wonder and congratulation.

Just as one always fears for the pupils of media dons such as A.C. Grayling and Professor Lisa Jardine, such is the torrent of books and articles that descends from their busy pens, so one always marvels that the psychoanalyst Adam Phillips has the time to sit by his patients' couch.

This is his 11th outing between hard covers, not to mention his editorship of the Penguin Freud and the celebrity walk-ons in literary biography (see Robert McCrum's life of P.G. Wodehouse for an example of Phillips being brought in to confirm layman's speculation).

*Going Sane* turns out to be a pattern Phillips performance. What is sanity, our man innocuously wonders? There are plenty of definitions of madness: what about its bi-polar opposite? Apparently, so ground down is 21st century man that "we need an alternative now to wealth, happiness, security and long life as the main constituents of a Good Life." We need "to think about sanity as a different kind of prosperity", a "realistic hope", and Mr P here is just the man to write the guidebook.

There follows a cool 70 pages of "Notes Towards the Definition of Sanity", starting with *Hamlet* (natch), noting that the mad get all the good lines and immediately revealing one of the main procedural elements of the Phillips method. This is his habit of repeating the same things in slightly different ways. Thus: "Sanity, in other words – and there are very few other words for it or about it – has never really had a vocabulary, has never made a name for itself. It already exists, but we don't know where to look for it. It is not, for example, something our parents are likely to have told us about." The sane, it appears, "are not news". Even as "figures in the mist", the

sane are "still haunting us, still pressing their staggeringly vague claims".

No one could say that the claims made here are staggeringly vague, oh dear me no. Moving on to part two – where he considers childhood, sex, schizophrenia and money – Mr P goes suddenly all apocalyptic on us. He quotes his particular professional hero D.W. Winnicott to the effect that "We are poor indeed if we are only sane". He characterises the modern child as "a demonic fantasist" who "has to be redeemed by acknowledging reality." Meanwhile, all the white-coats agree, apparently, that "there is something catastrophic about being a person."

And yet, happy to relate, our man has a hankering for the obvious too. So, at the start of part three ("Sane Now") he suggests that "All blueprints of what people should be like are at once denials of reality and attempts to create it anew." At this point readers everywhere will be dashing off to write this one down. As for the conclusion, why now, "instead of sanity as seeming to be a choice between conformity and self-assertion, between sincerity and authenticity, between duty and desire, the sane person would want, ideally, to incorporate each of these into a repertoire rather than make the grand gesture of choosing between them."

This sounds suspiciously like a glamorous way of saying that the average life consists of a series of checks and limitations which the average human being sub-consciously applies to keep him or herself on the straight and narrow. *Going Sane* is full of these psychological commonplaces dressed up in alluring language.



## BOOKS & BOOKMEN

■ NOT ONE but two leg-ups for staffers in the *Observer's* review pages of 20 March.

*The Apologist* by food critic Jay Rayner was described as "a funny, quietly thoughtful book about our desire to atone for the past, and the way that, somehow, we can never

quite manage to".

Meanwhile, feature writer Simon Garfield was also garnering plaudits for his *Our Hidden Lives: The Remarkable Diaries of Postwar Britain*: "It's the daily, small, victories and defeats of our diarists that make this book so addictive... The result is a fascinating insight into a way of life now vanished."

And the mention of their status as *Observer* employees? That too had vanished.

'Bookworm'



## LIBRARY NEWS

■ BRIGHTON's new library may well be "supremely elegant" (*Times*), "a new chapter in design" (*Independent*), "stunning" (*Grauniad*) and, of course, "cutting edge" (*Brighton Argus*). Trouble is, the building, pleasing though it may be to the eye, is a "design statement" first and a library second.

Praise for the design centres on the building's "floating" first floor, which the council calls "a magic-carpet ride". The sides are open, with a large gap between the floor and the wall. With readers inside, sound wafts upwards throughout the building. Relentlessly open-plan, the building provides no quiet, closed-off sections for general use.

As the PFI money ran out, bog-standard metal shelves had to be used, detracting considerably from the wooden walls. Low, and sparsely filled, with many books face-on, they do not provide a vista of books, nor act as much-needed acoustic buffers. The vast, echoing spaces could easily accommodate the tens of thousands of books kept in store, or those notoriously dumped in a skip (*Eye* 1127).

The *Eye* has received a letter from Skidrow-on-Sea's cabinet member for culture, Sue John, in which she is scathing about the books-in-skip story, saying they were volumes no one borrowed and which even charity shops didn't want (see Letters). Cllr John

## FIRST DRAFTS



T.S. Eliot

told a different story, however, in a council meeting earlier this month, admitting that dumping the books was "a mistake" by an unnamed member of staff, and that guidelines would be drawn up to prevent it happening again.

"Teething troubles" from the opening weekend, such as faulty lifts and computer systems, have persisted.

● Sue John's letter to the *Eye* also takes issue with some points raised about Hove library in *Eye* 1127. In reply, Disgruntled of Hove writes that mixing reference books with those for borrowing would effectively end the special quality of the reference library as a quiet place for reading and study. Hove library would not be getting a £275,000-plus refurbishment had residents not mounted a vigorous campaign to save it! It would have been closed. Had closure taken place, the savings and/or proceeds would have gone into B&H council's coffers, thereby offsetting council expenditure on, among other things, the new library.

## WHAT YOU DIDN'T MISS PART 94

### Those Spring Literary Festival Highlights...

**Sunday Guardian Oxford-on-Wye Literary Festival** includes John Humphrys: *I've Written a Book* (Union, 16 April, 8pm); John Sergeant: *So Have I* (Marquee, 9pm); Fergal Keane, Jon Snow, Rageh Omar, Michael Buerk: *So Have We* (Main Hall, 10pm), plus Ned Twinky: *Where do I go to get paid?* (Cornmarket, 5 pm); Stephen Fry, Greg Dyke and Piers Moron: *Here We All Are Again* (Library, 6.30pm); John Walsh interviews Ann Actress (Assembly Room, 9pm.)

**Llandruidnod Wells Literary Festival** (no sponsor), includes A. Writer: *My interesting new novel* (cancelled due to lack of interest).



# Pseud's Corner

Sir,

Hunter S. Thompson did not simply "blaze a trail", he ignited it (Arts, Feb 26). His passion, wit and insight grabbed a whole era of flower-power poets and writers and stood them on their jaundiced ears. A life of substance abuse silenced a voice that was brilliant, but let's never forget that voice. My own tribute:

*Hunter was a Gatherer who rode the road/  
Choppers and Angels were his Motherlode/  
Stomped and Ripped his story was told/  
Damaged and Dangerous from carrying the  
load/So set him high on the funeral pyre/  
Strapped upright on his steed/Use Pretenders  
books to stoke the fire/Gonzo's spirit has been  
freed.*

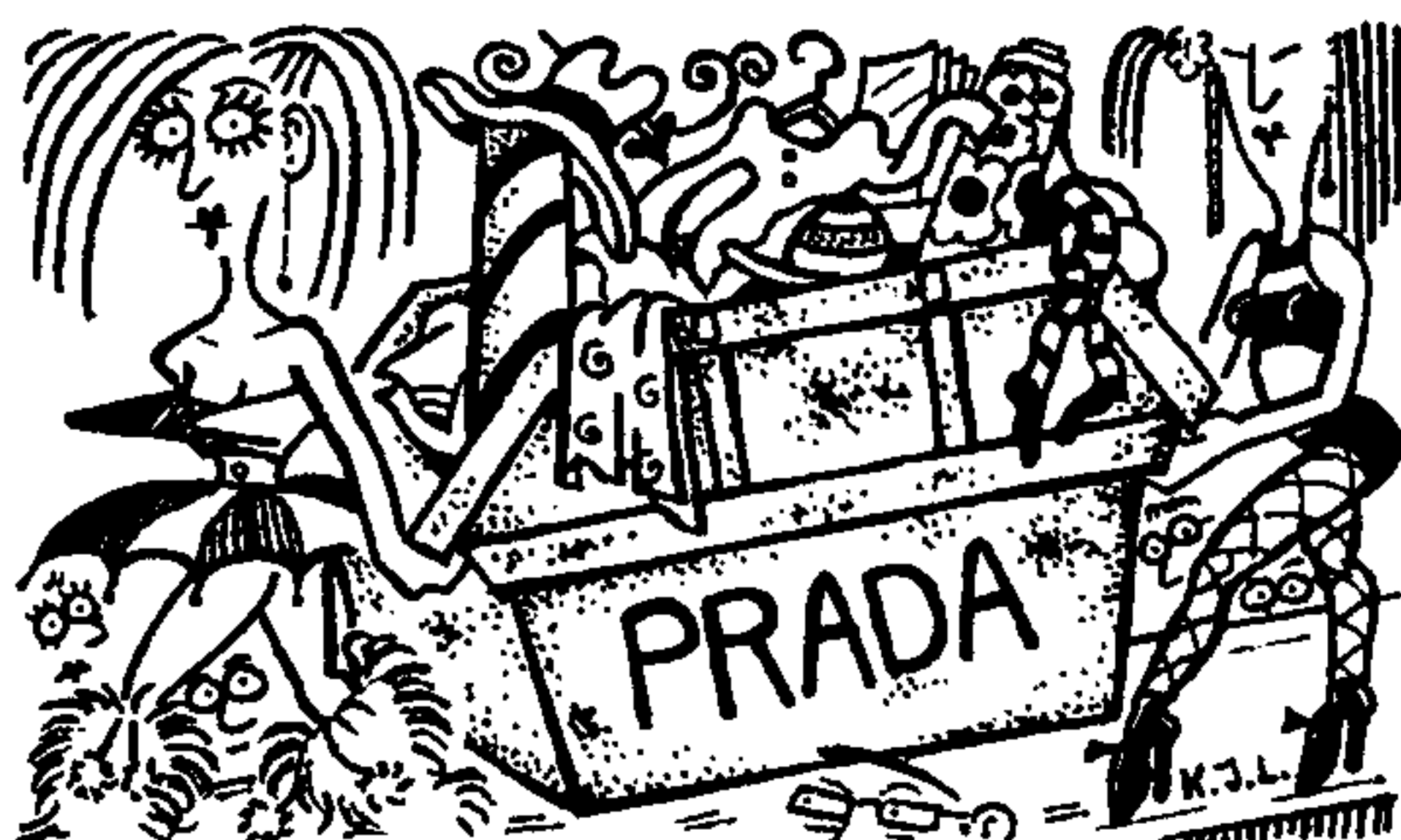
Letter to Daily Telegraph

This exhibition aims to question existing hegemonic structures of cultural, social, historical and political landscapes through the construction of platforms for discourse and spaces of tension via the recontextualisation of the geopolitical premise of the 'island'

**'Insomnia: Islandhopping 2002-2005'**  
at the ICA

To eat [pizza] bianca, with its oil-bathed crust and tensile core, is to understand society itself, a noble ideal based on simple ingredients: respect for self, others, liberty and law.

**MATTHEW TEMPLE**  
*Financial Times magazine*



What makes this bit of retail minutiae interesting is that runway shows rely for effect on shapes and split-second impressions. Take a closer look and Ms Prada's other and more interesting ambitions open up to view. Like the German artist Anselm Kiefer – whose monumental 'Seven Celestial Towers', an installation of enormous stacked structures made of concrete, lead and shattered glass, was on view at a hanger on the outskirts of Milan until a week ago – Ms Prada often plays games with accretion and destruction. Both scavenge the culture for metaphors and motifs and wrench them from their expected frame.

**GUY TREBAY** on the Prada range  
*New York Times*

## Pseud's Corporate

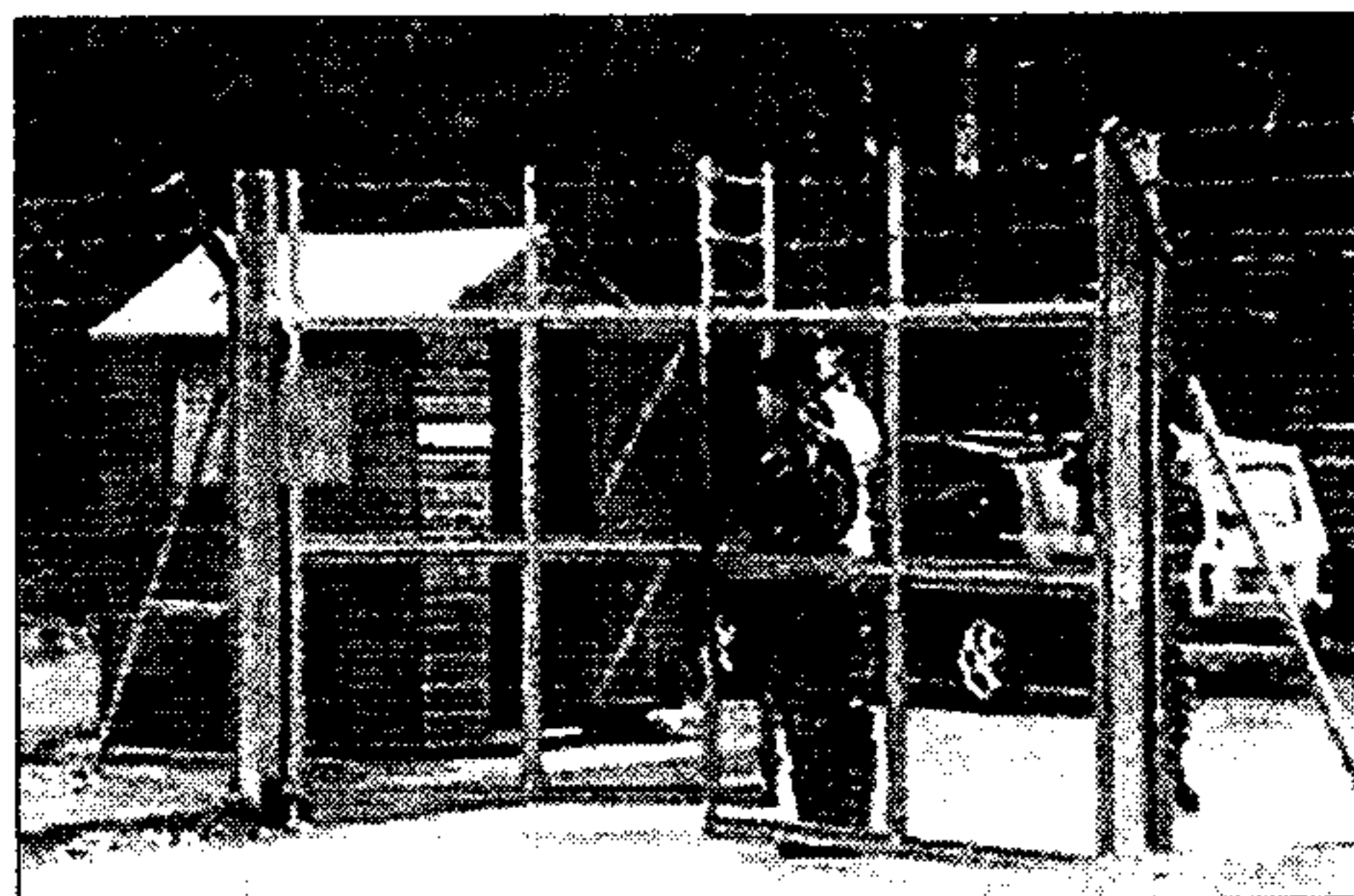
We have introduced a new form this year to improve the way in which we capture information about you and have pre-populated this with known details about your present course.

Letter from studentfinancedirect

CONTRIBUTORS: Janet Wasserstein,  
F. Webster, Ann Cattrall, Matthew Green,  
Roger Robinson-Brown

## IN THE BACK

### DEEPCUT DEATHS



## Doh, Selecta

**THE** Commons defence select committee had to perform breathtaking leaps of logic in order to reject demands for a public inquiry into the four fatal shootings at Deepcut barracks in Surrey.

In its report on the army's duty of care to its recruits, the committee trotted out the familiar claim favoured by ministers that since Surrey police have already investigated the deaths, there is nothing more to be said.

In fact no one has read that police report. Though completed a year and a half ago, it remains secret and in the hands of the local coroner. The defence committee was not shown it, has no idea how thorough the police investigation may or may not have been, and is therefore in no position to endorse it as the last word.

Another reason for ruling out an inquiry, so desperately sought by the families, was that "physical and forensic evidence... fundamental to

any new investigation has been lost". By "lost" the MPs mean that guardroom documents were shredded, bloodstained clothes were incinerated and guns were wiped clean of ballistics traces.

Few deny that such destruction of evidence will make it harder to establish the truth. But these actions reek of cover-up, or at best serial cock-up, and make the need for an inquiry even greater.

The committee also worried about "the logistical difficulties in tracing the thousands of staff and trainees who have passed through training establishments during the period under consideration". Troublesome as this might be, shouldn't the committee have picked up some clues from former recruits it did hear from? Survivors of Deepcut, Catterick and other training establishments pointed out the frequency with which soldiers close to any unpleasant event found themselves scattered to fresh postings within a couple of weeks, sparing them the trouble of giving evidence. This ruse even has a nickname: "starbursting".

The MPs also declared: "We accept the minister's argument that such an inquiry, if conducted thoroughly, could be extremely time consuming and prohibitively expensive." This bleating is usually accompanied by references to the huge bills for the Bloody Sunday inquiry. But what about the value of the disturbing inquiries into the deaths of Stephen Lawrence and Victoria Climbié?

The MPs also decided there could be no grounds for an inquiry "unless the Blake review turns up new evidence". But this is nonsense too. The Blake review is a Deepcut investigation ordered by the ministry of defence and led by Nicholas Blake QC. But as the defence committee itself observed (and then forgot), Blake's remit is limited to "evaluating only previously considered documents". So it has no chance of coming up with fresh evidence.

The MoD, desperate to prevent a public inquiry, must be delighted by the select committee's contorted logic.

### SELLAFIELD

## Safety last

**ONE** PERSON not in the least surprised by British Nuclear Fuels' admission that it could not account for 30kg of radioactive plutonium (enough for seven nuclear bombs) was Ron Hanas, a nuclear physicist once responsible for radiation protection at Sellafield.

Three years ago at an industrial tribunal, Mr Hanas blew the whistle on what he described as BNFL's "institutionally cavalier" attitude to safety, storage and monitoring of radioactive materials.

He claimed that the huge Cumbrian plant held inaccurate data on the amount of plutonium and uranium waste it stored. Many items were not properly recorded, calibration of measuring instruments was inaccurate and checks on storage were a "joke". In one instance, he told the tribunal, a radioactive lump of what was believed to be a section of uranium fuel rod was found in a worker's drawer outside the restricted compound.

Mr Hanas found that BNFL had failed to register a large number of nuclear sources with the Environment Agency, including plutonium and uranium, so they could be independently monitored. Legal action followed against BNFL, resulting in fines and costs of £22,000 for safety breaches. During the case the court heard that another source had been found in another drawer – this one belonging to a dead worker. No one knew how long it had been there.

The company was also fined £24,000 for failing to look after its sealed sources properly, having been served with enforcement notices to clean up its act. Only this month a further 26 sources of radioactive material were reported to have been found in a research and development laboratory within the compound. They were



believed to have been in the room for 10 years before being discovered, but BNFL claims they did not pose a hazard.

Despite this, Mr Hanas went on to lose his employment tribunal after the panel decided that his resignation from BNFL had come about as a result of a growing antagonism between him and another employee, rather than as a result of BNFL not taking his concerns over safety seriously.

Norman Baker, Lib Dem environment spokesman, has now tabled a series of parliamentary questions arising from Mr Hanas's concerns. Those in the industry, including Mr Hanas, accept that there are difficulties when complex chemical measurements are used to account for plutonium at all stages of reprocessing, in storage and in waste, but large discrepancies in figures suggest weaknesses in the system.

Norman Baker said: "Those who are proposing a second generation of power stations should think again when it is clear that half a century on from the first, the industry cannot get basic safety systems in place."

*In the Back continues overleaf*

## PFI

## All hail the profit

**A**S companies become more confident that the private finance initiative (PFI) is here to stay, one or two of them are less coy about revealing the vast profits they are making from the deals.

Carillion, which was Tarmac until it moved out of the black stuff and into the crisp folding stuff, has put a value of £83m on its PFI schemes – an impressive return on investment of just £29m. Independent analysts believe the true value is probably more than £100m.

Balfour Beatty, meanwhile, admits that its original PFI investments of £180m are probably now worth in the region of £600m.

These values represent the profits that the owners of the PFI projects – now increasingly sold on the “secondary market” – can expect to reap over the next 20 or 30 years, all payable from public funds and based on contracts agreed at the outset.

The PFI industry naturally maintains that such profits are fine because the taxpayer is getting value for money from ruthlessly negotiated contracts. But closer examination reveals that in many cases most of the companies’ profits emerge from extra charges imposed *after* the company has been made “preferred bidder” – ie once it has become a one horse race.

*Eye* 1127 reported how Carillion’s hugely profitable Darent Valley PFI deal was won after a bidding process that the national audit office (NAO) found to have lacked competition. And in 2004 the Commons public accounts committee (PAC) found that the firm had been up to similar tricks with its PFI deal to build the government communications headquarters (GCHQ), where there were exclusive negotiations before signing the contract “during which time the price increased by 21 percent, not wholly in a competitive environment”.

Much of the value of Balfour Beatty’s PFI portfolio comes from its stake in the London

Underground PPP through the Metronet consortium, which is already earning profits of £50m per year despite, according to a report from parliament’s transport committee, increased delays, derailments and safety breaches (and of course huge extra costs).

## Jolly Boateng weather

**H**OW long before the joys of the private finance initiative are visited upon taxpayers in South Africa, where Paul Boateng is to become Britain’s high commissioner?

A quick look through Boateng’s engagements over the last years shows that, along with Africa, the treasury chief secretary’s main interest has been promoting the PFI. In the last two years he has spoken at the Partnerships UK conference, the global PPP conference, the PFI congress and addressed the Turkish government on the virtues of PFI.

Perhaps his finest hour was in May 2003 when he gave a long speech, complete with video presentation, to the South African trade summit in Johannesburg, painting a picture of PFI in the UK that would have been unrecognisable to most British people. (Three years earlier, the then financial secretary Stephen Timms had travelled to Cape Town to plug PFIs, largely on the strength of a discredited survey by Arthur Andersen showing that they produced big savings.)

Given such one-sided stories on PFI, and despite strong protest from local unions, it’s not surprising the South African government has embraced PFI – with lucrative contracts emerging for many British PFI firms. The South African finance ministry has also had plenty of help from the privatised but taxpayer-funded Partnerships UK on, among other things, “standardising” contracts in the way that has allowed PFI companies to make such huge profits in Britain.

The prime minister’s official spokesman dismissed any talk of cronyism surrounding Boateng’s appointment, referring instead to a “happy coincidence of interests and opportunity”. With such an ardent PFI fan in Pretoria, the “happy coincidence” of Boateng’s interest in Africa looks set to be as much an opportunity for the PFI industry as for the man himself.

## PRISONS

## NOMS-starter

**III** **H**OW long will Martin Narey, chief executive of the disastrous National Offender Management Service (Noms), keep his job? The deficiencies of the £4bn fiasco become more glaring by the day.

MPs recently secured an adjournment debate, worried that money is being spent on Noms’ burgeoning management rather than frontline services. Prisons, struggling with record numbers of inmates (more than 75,000), have even had their budgets frozen by Narey, which has led to cuts in rehabilitation programmes and the mothballing of cells.

In 2004-5 the cost of setting up the NOMs HQ already topped £105m. This will rise further with the hiring of more than 50 staff for each of the proposed 10 regional manager sites.

Memos to Narey from the men who head the prison and probation services reveal some serious concerns. The memos, leaked to the probation officers’ union, Napo, respond to Narey’s blueprint which opens the way for privatisation of both services with the introduction of purchaser/provider division. (Tenders were invited to run three jails in Kent only last week.)

Steve Murphy, director-general of the national probation service, wrote: “I am concerned that there may be too much attention on HQ design... and not enough either on delivery or on design of the service out there.” At the prison service, meanwhile, director-general Phil Wheatley expressed worries about duplication of functions, tight timetables and everything from the break-up of units governing drug strategy to the care of young and vulnerable offenders.

Noms was also supposed to increase partnerships with voluntary groups, but some in this sector say the money spent on a new army of civil servants is starving them of funds. C-Far, a respected and innovative project in Devon which has reduced reoffending among young adults, was forced into liquidation two weeks ago through a cash crisis. Narey refused to increase Noms’ £250,000 input, even though it costs just £13,500 to put a young person through a C-Far “life changing” course but £35,000-plus to keep an inmate in jail for a year. The Social Exclusion Unit estimates a persistent offender costs taxpayers about £164,000 a year, so C-Far (RIP) was good value.

At a meeting with probation managers last month a senior Noms official admitted: “There is no evidence that the offender manager/intervention split will deliver anything. But we have to do it because of political diktat.” And there you have it.

## PROPERTY

## Ideal Home?

**V**ISITORS to the *Daily Mail*’s Ideal Home Show which ended on Monday may have found one of the hundreds of exhibitors there particularly intriguing.

It was run by United Kingdom Land Investment, a company which offers lucky investors the chance to pick up prime land that its “experienced team of property professionals” believe will soon rocket in price due to the impending granting of planning permission.

While visitors to the show could learn much from the literature available on the company’s stall, this ringing endorsement was curiously not displayed: “There are more questions than answers about UK Land Investments Group and more spin than substance... UKLI’s investors will find they have bought a dud, all investors are likely to get for their money is some very expensive grass.”

Who says? None other than the *Mail on Sunday*’s Tony Hetherington, in the regular column he writes for the paper investigating financial wrongdoing. Sadly, his employers at the Daily Mail Group seem to take a less rigorous line when it comes to accepting exhibitors for their events.

## WAR ON TERROR

## Wrong arm of the law

**A**LI MANZARPOUR, a British citizen of Iranian origin, has been arrested in Poland on the order of the United States for trying to export a small aeroplane to Iran even though Britain’s department of trade (DTI) had licensed the export.

Manzarpour has been in jail in Poland since February as the US seeks his extradition. The Americans claim his arrest is part of their “anti terrorism strategy”.

While Britain bans the export of arms to Iran, the DTI saw no problem in licensing the export of a “Berkut 360”, a small kit plane sent in pieces to be assembled and, typically, flown by individual enthusiasts. The US has an almost complete embargo on any trade with Iran unless it is licensed by the Office of Foreign Assets Control. Because Manzarpour bought the Berkut in the US, an international arrest warrant was issued while Manzarpour was in Poland on business.

Unfortunately for the Brighton-based businessman, while many EU countries would have looked sceptically at a US request to arrest an exporter with a European licence, Poland is politically and legally close to the US. American officials say Manzarpour could face up to 50 years in jail, though eight years is more likely if he is extradited.

Iran has its own aircraft industry capable of building jet fighters and buys military kit from the

Ukraine, China and North Korea. The Iranian Air Force has jets, helicopters and other combat craft, so the DTI judged that a small kit plane was indeed intended for a wealthy enthusiast and not a danger to the world. The US department of justice, by contrast, said Manzarpour’s arrest was a “critical component of the department’s anti-terrorism strategy” and that “in the post-9/11 world, keeping sensitive US technology out of the wrong hands has never been more important”. The *Eye* asked the department what “sensitive technologies” were involved in the kit plane but the attorney’s office did not elaborate.

Manzarpour’s arrest is the latest example of “extraterritoriality”, where US laws are applied around the globe. The fact that some big US corporations like Halliburton have avoided restrictions on trade with Iran by operating through subsidiaries based in Europe or the Cayman islands makes the arrest even more striking.

The US may be pursuing Manzarpour because he has form. In 1996 he was arrested for trying to export high strength “maraging” steel to Iran, a potentially serious offence. This steel can be used in missiles or the machinery used to make nuclear weapons; and Manzarpour served four months in an open prison. However, the *Eye* understands the DTI was fully aware of this when it considered his licence application for the kit plane.

## MMR

## The link effect



**Y**ET another epidemiological study, this time from Japan, has apparently revealed "no link between MMR and autism". But yet again the findings appear open to interpretation.

The *Eye* has often pointed out the limitations of epidemiological studies in identifying a possible

sub-set of children with regressive autism and gut disease at the centre of the controversy over the triple vaccine. These studies have consistently looked at what happened after MMR was introduced in populations of children, most of whom had had the triple jab. But the Japanese study offered something different. It was the first to examine autism trends after the vaccine had been withdrawn and in children who had not had the three-in-one jab. (MMR was withdrawn in Japan in 1993 in a crisis of confidence after the mumps component was linked to meningitis).

As the "nail in the coffin of the MMR controversy" newspaper reports suggested, the Japanese paper found that autism cases continued to rise *after* vaccine withdrawal. There were 48-86 cases per 10,000 children before withdrawal, which doubled to 97-161 per 10,000 afterwards. It reported a similar trend in children considered to have been developing normally and then regressing – like the ones at the centre of the MMR controversy.

On the face of it "resoundingly negative", as one of the authors, Hideo Honda, of the Yokohama Rehabilitation Center, claimed. They had found a similar trend to what is happening in the UK or US and concluded: "The withdrawal of MMR cannot be expected to lead to a reduction in the incidence of autistic spectrum disorders." But is it so straightforward?

Hostility over the MMR controversy is such that these days it is very unpopular to mention the name of Andrew Wakefield, the gastro-enterologist at the centre of the storm, let alone report his words. But with Dr Carol Stott, an academic psychologist at Cambridge, he has raised serious questions about the Japanese data and what they purport to show.

Unlike the US and UK, where the autism trend is steadily upwards, the Japanese data shows a "strikingly different" dip at the time that Japanese public confidence fell in MMR and vaccination generally. Autism rates had risen to 85.9 per 10,000 for children born in 1990, but then dropped to 55.8 for those born in 1991 when MMR uptake was falling ahead of its total withdrawal. Rates started to rise again at the time when the Japanese

public started to accept the notion of three separate vaccines.

Wakefield and Stott suggest that, because the three separate vaccines were given as little as four weeks apart (there is evidence to suggest some children had all three jabs on the same day), it was the same as being given MMR. Therefore, they argue, the "dip" in autism rates at a time when the children were not receiving measles, mumps or rubella vaccines in any form may indicate the opposite of the conclusions given to the Japanese paper.

A similar verdict on the Japan paper was also reached by US paediatrician Edward Yazbak, who in a commentary on it said that while MMR vaccination rates were high and rising in the UK, and low to nil in Japan, "autism increased more substantially in the UK".

One of the co-authors of the Honda paper was Professor Sir Michael Rutter, of the Institute of Psychiatry, who had prepared a draft report for GlaxoSmithKline, one of the defendant drug companies in the UK litigation but who was not retained by them. He told the *Eye* that as he was not an immunologist he could not comment on the suggestion that giving three separate vaccines a short time apart was the same as administering the MMR triple vaccine. But he added that although it was unfortunate there was little relevant material published on any possible interference between vaccine components, immunologists whom he had consulted doubted that this was a significant issue.

As to the dip in autism rates highlighted by Wakefield, Stott and Yazbak, Prof Rutter said there was nothing to show it was a statistically significant change and may merely have been a blip.

Prof Rutter said that the one good thing that had come out of Dr Wakefield's controversial 1998 paper that raised the MMR alarm, which he believed should not have been published in that form in the *Lancet*, was that it had triggered much useful autism research.

Some experts convinced of a real rise in autism across the developed world – rather than, as many still maintain, better diagnosis and detection – were now looking for an unknown environmental trigger that might interact with an unknown genetic risk. He said that while MMR could fit that environmental profile, he claimed his and other researchers work showed it did not fit the pattern.

Meanwhile a team from the department of pediatrics at the New Jersey Medical School (and nothing to do with Dr Wakefield) have published a study in the *Journal of Neuropsychology* which replicates Wakefield's findings of immune abnormalities in the diseased guts of children with autism. Further, independent work to see if Wakefield's and Prof John O'Leary's discovery of vaccine strain measles virus in the inflamed guts of autistic children with immune abnormalities can also be replicated continues in the US. The debate is not over yet.

## DEFENCE RESEARCH

## Deadly range

**I**N WHAT is believed to be the first case of its kind, two senior government scientists have appeared at the Old Bailey charged with the manslaughter of a colleague during an experiment that went horribly wrong.

Maurice Marshall OBE and Robert Weighill, who were working at the ministry of defence's Defence Science Technology Laboratories (DSTL) in Shoeburyness, Essex, are accused of killing 46-year-old Terry Jupp in August 2002.

Mr Jupp, from Hatfield in Hertfordshire, died of septicaemia from burn injuries sustained during an incident on a test range. The incident was investigated by ministry of defence police, but it is understood that the charges relate to health and safety issues.

With a court case pending, the MoD was even more reluctant than it usually is to discuss events at a defence test site. The only clue came in the DSTL's annual report for 2002 which said: "We are continuing to increase our involvement in the organisation's health and safety which, following the fatal accident at Shoeburyness, has taken on a very high priority."

The two scientists are expected to enter formal pleas of not guilty at the court later this month. Mr Marshall, director of materials, was due to be taking part in an international conference on explosives in the US later this year.

## ASBO

## Hartless?

**A**T 9pm on 29 October 2004, police served Susan Hartless with an anti-social behaviour order saying she and her four children had to leave their home immediately. The order was a complete surprise: the family knew nothing about any ASBO hearing and had not been warned about the behaviour of anyone in the family.

Last week the high court ruled that the family could stay in their home in Liphook, Hampshire, so long as they were all on best behaviour.

Moat Housing Association used consultancy firm Community Assist to take out the ASBO and the possession order against Ms Hartless, her partner Carl Harris (who was staying elsewhere on the day of the eviction but normally lives with the family) and their children, aged 14, nine, eight and seven.

Luckily for the family the police did not think that chucking the family on to the street that evening was a great idea and so gave them until the morning to leave. Overnight Ms Hartless found a solicitor who contacted a high court judge at 1.30am to get the order put on hold.

At the high court this month, Lord Justice Brooke found that most of the evidence gathered from neighbours and presented at the ASBO hearing by Community Assist boss Angus MacDonald was hearsay, and much of it lumped the Hartless family in with a different family in the same street, who were also served with an ASBO and evicted last year. The judge said MacDonald gave "statements of the utmost generality without identifying the source of his inevitably second hand or third hand evidence".

Decades of housing law says eviction should only be a last resort and "without notice" evictions should only be used in extreme circumstances. Lord Justice Brooke said there had been no previous warnings, no attempt to get social services involved in resolving behaviour problems and none of the family had criminal records.

The two middle children had glowing school reports and Ms Hartless' eight-year-old daughter was due to appear in a carnival with her Brownie Guide pack the day after the ASBO was served. The teenage boy's behaviour on the estate had been unacceptable (fighting and shouting abuse) and both parents had rowed with neighbours; but making the entire family homeless was unreasonable, said the judge.



## FURTHER EDUCATION

## UFI spotted

**F**OLLOWING the e-University cock-up (£40m spent to attract 900 students), Britain's other mammoth internet-based education scheme is also turning out to be disastrously expensive.

University For Industry (UFI) was launched in 1998 by the then education secretary David Blunkett to "exploit the opportunities created by information and communication techniques to create new markets for learning".

According to the national audit office (NAO), public spending on UFI's main project, leamdirect, had topped £500m by last March. UFI was supposed to pay its way, at least in part, through private investment. Yet *Computing* magazine

reported that while it had raised £27m through selling learning materials in 2003, it attracted a feeble £995,000 in private investment. The NAO is carrying out a value for money review.

One standard solution for failing businesses is to bring in better board members. UFI's newest recruit is principal Bryn Davies of Ystrad Mynach FE college in South Wales. An inspection of the college last year was highly critical of the management team led by Mr Davies. In particular the inspectors found "shortcomings in important areas" in the way resources were managed and said Ystrad Mynach offered "inadequate value for money". Mr Davies should feel at home on the UFI board.



## In the City

**T**HE collapse of the Jubilee Line corruption trial has justifiably once again ignited the debate about whether juries should be involved in deciding long and complex cases. But for once the Serious Fraud Office, contrary to some reports and impressions, was not involved. This was a cock-up of the crown prosecution service's (CPS) making.

The longest ever jury trial began in June 2003 and was expected to last eight months, but would have lasted well beyond the two-year mark. However, the court only sat 111 of the 272 available working days during 21 months. The jury had only heard defence evidence for five days since October! The total bill could be as much as £60m with legal aid fees alone reaching £14m. Repayment of legal fees for two defendants could exceed that figure. Two jurors had already been discharged when the trial collapsed when a third refused to attend any longer because of personal financial difficulties.

What the Jubilee trial shows is that sadly too many judges and prosecutors still believe that justice must be done at any cost to the taxpayer. A long time before the rebel juror cried enough, the trial judge, Judge Ann Goddard QC, should have abandoned the Jubilee trial and started again or ended the whole fiasco.

Sadly nobody ever seems to speak for the taxpayer when it comes to lengthy trials. Nobody intervenes waiving the bill to date and demanding, like in the Monty Python sketch, that the trial had become very silly and must stop. Once started, trials appear immune to the financial constraints that impact upon every other area of government spending.

But why should lawyers care when there are fees beyond the dreams of avarice to be earned? What public spirited lawyer is going to step off such a gravy train? Those involved in the Jubilee trial can rightly say that they have to defend their clients' interests. The prosecutors can equally rightly say that corruption must be prosecuted. And the judge will rightly agree with both views. But does not justice also have to be seen to be cost effective in the days when school meals need funding a little more than lawyers?

Corruption trials, unlike fraud trials, are not that complex so the fraud analogy is a red herring. The issues are usually whether or not the defendants received or handed over brown envelopes. A jury is perfectly able to judge such

an issue. But not if they are effectively imprisoned for 21 months! How do they correctly recall what was said years ago? Why should anybody be forced to carry out their duty as a citizen for such a long period? Especially when the jury pool is largely limited to the retired, the unemployed and those without middle class excuses or when hearings are constantly interrupted for long periods by the famous "legal argument"?

The Jubilee jury sat for only 44 of the 111 trial days. Another 36 were spent in their absence on legal arguments which should have been decided in the three years between the charges in 2000 and the start of the trial. That is what pre-trial proceedings are supposed to be about!

But a sad fact of British justice is that judges and lawyers, for all their fine words in court, have too little concern for jurors' interests. They rank well down the food chain below those of defendants, judges and of course lawyers themselves. Only the taxpayer is seen as less important.

How else to explain what happened to the Jubilee jurors? Who else would put up with such treatment for little compensation over so long under the guise of doing their public duty? No

wonder they were not told that while they could claim a maximum £200 a day (a change only brought in after the trial was more than a year old) legal aid fees were £600 a day and those not on legal aid could have been earning up to £3,000 a day!

The attorney-general Lord Goldsmith has expressed his "considerable disquiet" about the Jubilee fiasco and set up an inquiry. So that's all right then! Perhaps the inquiry will finally address the issues of cost benefit and

treatment of jurors as a matter of priority, as well as impressing upon trial judges that these issues matter. One way to prevent the abuses such as Jubilee is to insist – as the Lord Chief Justice Lord Woolf has now said – that trials must end within six to nine months.

Trials cannot be allowed to exceed a year under penalty of being halted for abuse of process. A few more wasted costs orders against lawyers and an insistence that barristers' other commitments are irrelevant to keeping the show on the road might also help. Also, accepting that jurors too have lives and rights would be a change for the better.

Perhaps that is why so many in the legal profession are so opposed to allowing jurors to speak publicly about their experiences as consumers of the criminal justice system and give their views of those judges and lawyers who speak so deferentially while giving them the mushroom treatment – kept in the dark and covered in shit.



*"For the benefit of the tape, Mr Bryant has donned a glove puppet and is proceeding to pull silly faces at me whilst making rude gestures"*

**T**HE struggle for power inside AIM minnow Savoy Asset Management features a number of Tories beyond chairman and former chancellor, Ken Clarke. He is stoutly defending chief executive Christopher Saunders against the demands of the Kuwaiti investors who are Savoy's largest shareholders that he should step down.

Clarke and Saunders are old political friends. A factor that perhaps contributed to Clarke becoming the £50,000-a-year chairman in 2000. Saunders was a former regional Tory party chairman and, like Clarke, a keen Europhile. He donated £5,000 to Clarke's unsuccessful party leadership bid in 2001 and £1,000 to the previous bid in 1997.

Interestingly the Clarke entry in the 2002 Commons' register of MPs' interests states that "Tutton & Saunders", presumably the Savoy stockbroking subsidiary run by Saunders and Tom Tutton, also donated £2,500 to chairman Clarke's 2001 campaign. If this was donated by the Savoy subsidiary, why that should have been in shareholders' interests is not immediately clear. If not this would explain why there is no mention of the £2,500 in the Savoy or Tutton & Saunders accounts.

Also supporting Saunders is Sarah Taylor, lawyer daughter of former Tory minister Lord Rippon who is paid a generous £25,000 as a non-executive director. And a former Savoy director was ex-Tory MP Sir Dennis Walters. If SAM looks, however unfairly, like a Tory benevolent society run at the shareholders' expense, no wonder the Kuwaitis are unhappy.

**T**HE tin pot town councillors who run the septic isle of Jersey are getting extremely agitated over criticisms of their tame financial regulators by maverick local politico Ted Vibert.

Efforts are being stepped up to censor or close down two websites used by Senator Vibert to attack the Jersey financial services commission (JFSC) and raise other uncomfortable questions about the way the septic isle is run. The row is expected to spill over into a hearing of the local parliament or States next week.

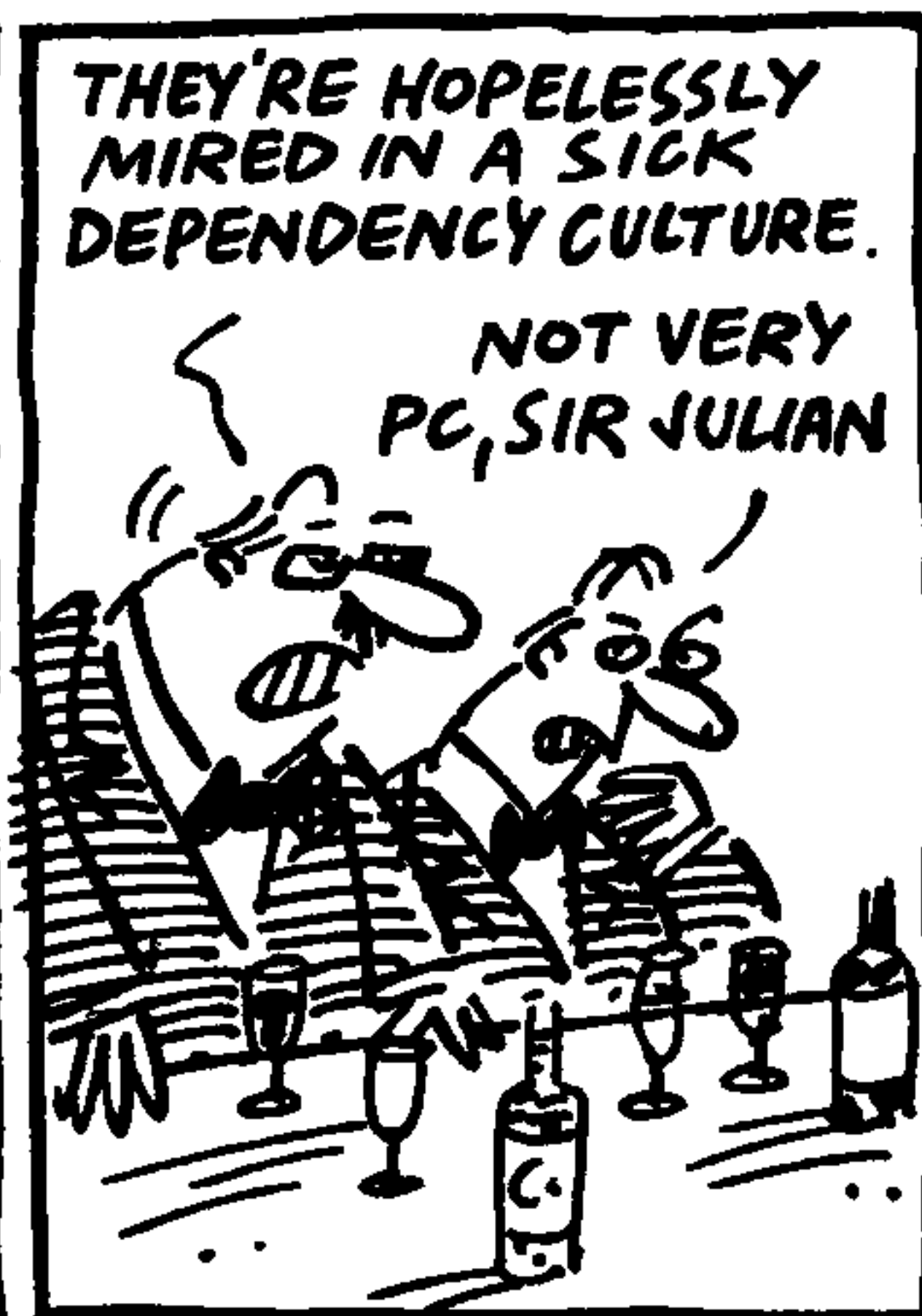
More fuel for the debate over how well the JFSC runs the island's all-important finance sector is rumoured to be lurking below the surface at the local branch of Standard Chartered. It has already attracted more than its fair share of attention over breaches of Iraqi sanctions, as well as commission payments to Qatar's foreign minister and a corrupt Pakistani admiral – not to mention facilitating the frauds of convicted money manager Graham Hammond.

Local bank sources suggest that a new high profile investigation has been launched involving Standard Chartered. This time the investigation is rumoured to be linked to the corruption-riddled United Nations Iraq oil-for-food programme and to possibly involve Kojo Annan, son of the UN secretary-general, Kofi Annan.

The rumours surrounding Standard Chartered's operations in Jersey have also been unfairly encouraged by the surprise (and no doubt unrelated) news that its local managing director, Paul Walkden, is leaving the bank at the end of

## THE DIRECTORS

DREDGE & RIGG



March after just two years in the post. Walkden had to field the flak from the Qatar, Iraqi and Hammond scandals, even though they originated under previous management.

An independent UN committee is due to publish a report this week on the relationship between payments made by the Swiss inspection company Cotecna and Kojo Annan during the period that Cotecna obtained a \$60m, six-year contract to oversee the oil-for-food programme. Kojo Annan worked for Cotecna in Nigeria and was employed as a consultant when it was awarded the UN contract in 1998. After ceasing to be a consultant he was paid non-compete payments for four years.

The independent investigation is said to have uncovered that Annan junior was paid \$300,000 by Cotecna between 1999 and 2004. Both Cotecna and Kojo Annan have denied any corruption or wrongdoing in their relationship or the payments. Kofi Annan said last November he was "very disappointed and surprised" by the non-compete payments.

Just what if any role Standard Chartered played in the oil-for-food scandal is not yet clear but may emerge once the Cotecna report is published. But should the bank be implicated, there is certain to be pressure for more serious action to be taken than over either the Qatar or Iraqi scandals.

In 2003 the Jersey attorney-general agreed to drop any charges over the £100m paid into trust company accounts by arms companies, including BAE, after Sheikh Hamad bin Jaber al-Thani paid £6m to reimburse the cost of the police investigation.

The A-G, William Bailhache, also decided last year not to pursue Standard Chartered over blatant breaches of UK sanctions uncovered by an investigation ordered by the JFSC into the local trust company in the wake of the Qatar scandal. More than £4m had been paid out of some of the 70 Iraqi-linked accounts in clear breach of sanctions regulations. The A-G decided it was not in the public interest to prosecute and last November the JFSC also decided to take no action after a second report into Standard Chartered's implementation of improved anti-money laundering controls.

This decision surprised many local observers as it was clear that the JFSC's then director-general Richard Pratt had been highly critical of the bank's continual compliance failings, which is why he had ordered the internal investigation by Ernst & Young in March 2003. But he was replaced in late 2003 by David Carse, former deputy chief executive of the Hong Kong Monetary Authority.

Critics say that under Carse the JFSC has begun to take a less aggressive approach to regulating local financial institutions, perhaps influenced by concern about reputational damage at a time when Jersey is facing ever increasing competition for tax haven money from less scrupulous offshore centres.

Carse's deputy Helen Hatton surprised many last year by suggesting that maybe fines were not the right policy for regulators. A view manifestly not shared by the financial services authority (FSA) in London. JFSC supporters reject suggestions that the regulator has gone soft.

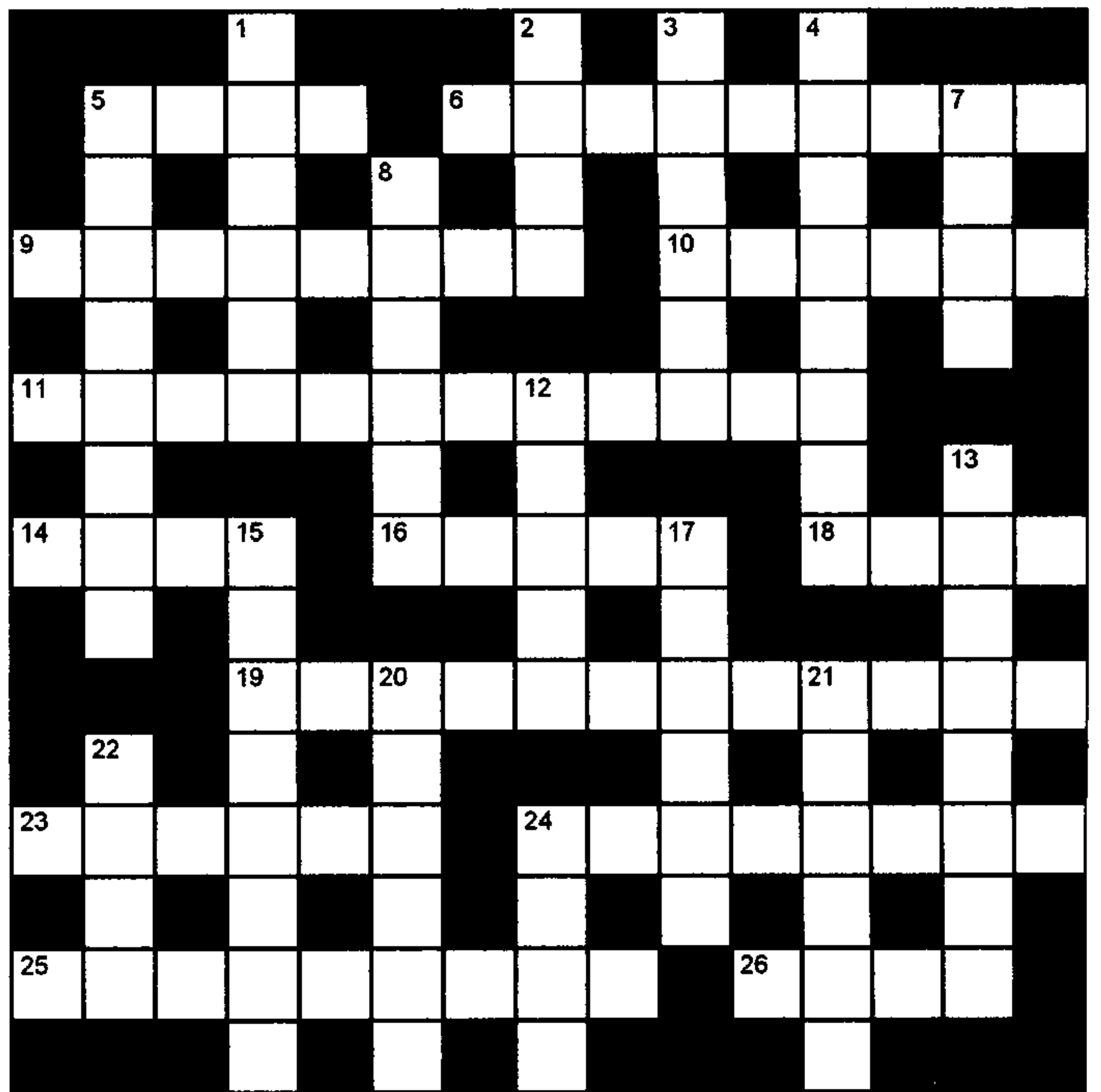
No doubt unfairly, critics also point to the irrelevant and coincidental fact that Carse, who was seconded from the Bank of England to Hong Kong in 1991, is not unknown to Standard Chartered's group chief executive, Mervyn Davies, who for several years until 2001 ran its Hong Kong operation, one of the largest in the former British colony. Most certainly this played no part in the JFSC's decision to take no further action against Standard Chartered.

However, any new scandal involving Jersey and Standard Chartered is certain to encourage not only local critics such as Ted Vibert but also concern the UK authorities. It was of course purely coincidental that earlier this month a four-strong team from the treasury and FSA paid a "routine" visit to David Carse and his colleagues at the JFSC.

'Slicker'

## EYE CROSSWORD 284 by Cyclops

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### ACROSS

- 5 Blair's first on the buzzer wanting backing from a broadcaster (4)  
6 Camilla at present is second-rate shag – time to get an honour? (5-2-2)  
9 VD? Enmesh balls (8)  
10 Brussels-style junket for this representative? (4,2)  
11 See 24dn.  
14/18 Straw's success: sod all! (4,4)  
16 What Camilla will never do: use leather strap to restrict weight (5)  
18 See 14 ac.  
19 Rejected non-religious alternative to union – it won't be a churchy affair, though (5,7)  
23 Hacks Charles and Camilla share an interest in (6)  
24 Shaft gets Kelvin and fool firmly connected (4-4)  
25 Friendly missiles, Jon? Cobblers! (9)  
26 See 22dn.

### DOWN

- 1 Kay wants no piss-up to proceed (4,2)  
2 Number two? Useless! (4)  
3 "They have beastly tits, different people," Kissinger would say (6)  
4 Harsh Brenda's exposed (8)  
5 It's Brenda's place to get up a party - honest! (8)  
7 Documents arse on female (4)  
8 Ex-jailbird and demonstrator leader ditched (6)  
12 Sharon's cleaner? (5)  
13 Some bloomers are made for either sex, with frilly linen round tip of pudenda (8)  
15 Pisspoor USA work given to ace film director (8)  
17 Drug injector's prick (6)  
20 Old group and crew: "Brown-noser" (3-3)  
21 Unilateral decree from member heard to take crap (6)  
22/26 Screwing Carl now on line – will soon have a duchess (8)  
24/11 What Camilla won't do: swallow it (he, naked, is devastated) (4,4,3,5)

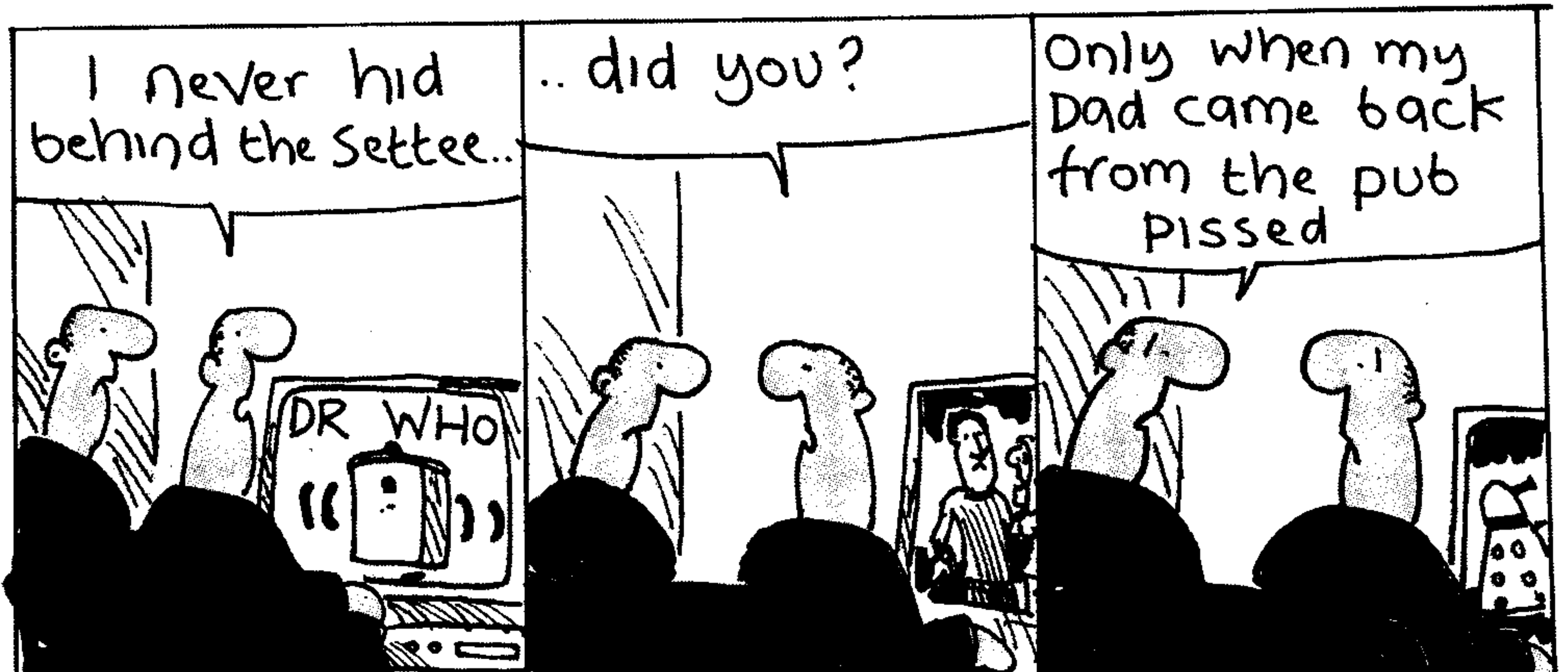
### Crossword 283 winner: JERRY DAVIES

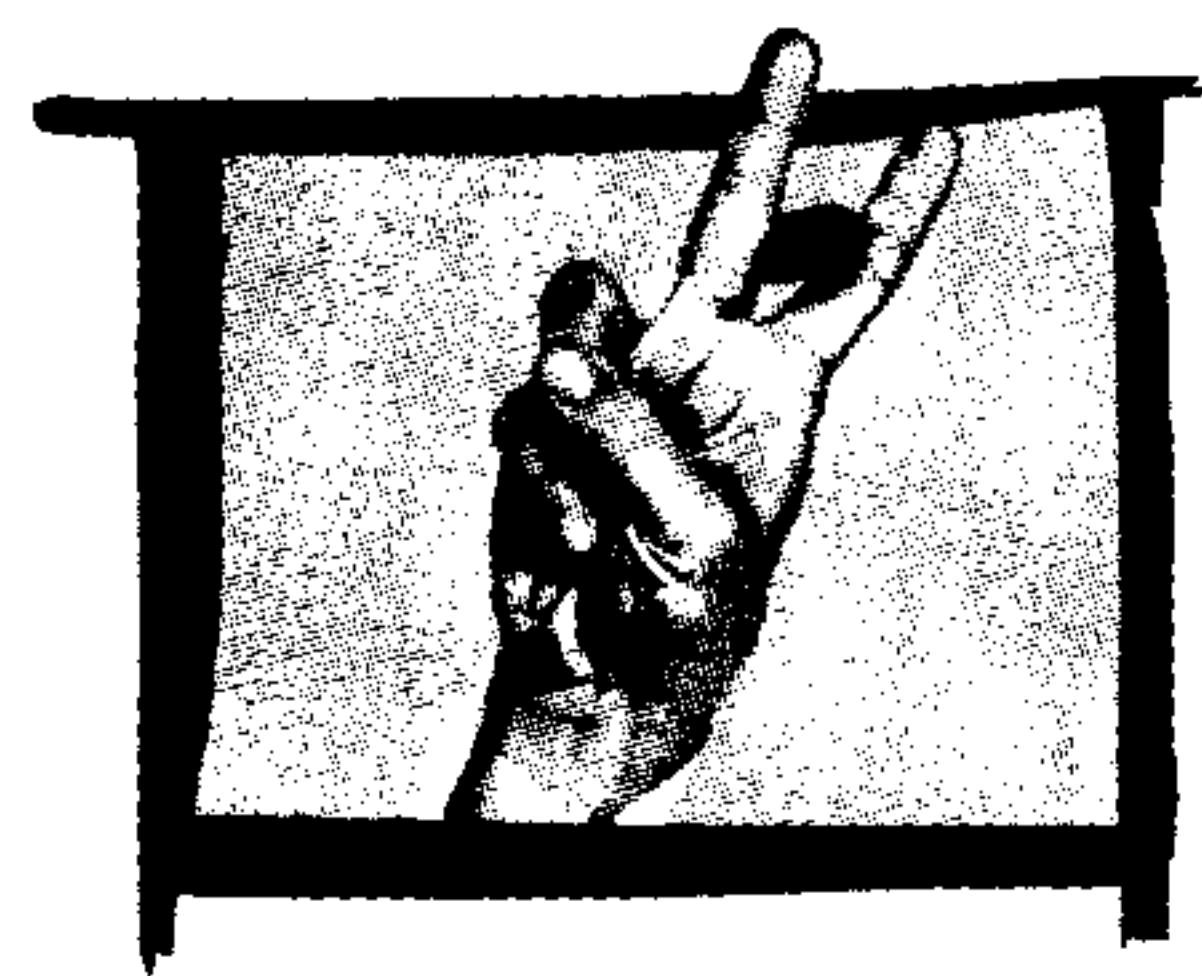
ACROSS: 1/29 Burnt toast 4 Ball games 9 Angered 10 Flannel 11 Hot potato 12 Puffy 13 Gucci 15 Enlist 19 Snatch 20/23 Brown bread 22 Climb 24 Cavaliers 26 Concede 27 Trustee 28 Slanderer.

DOWN: 1 Bear hugs 2 Right 3 Terrorist 4 Bedpan 5 Leftover 6 Grasp 7 Manifesto 8 Silly 14 Consignia 16 Libel suit 17 Thick ear 18 In a sweat 21 Avatar 22 Cocks 25 Extra.

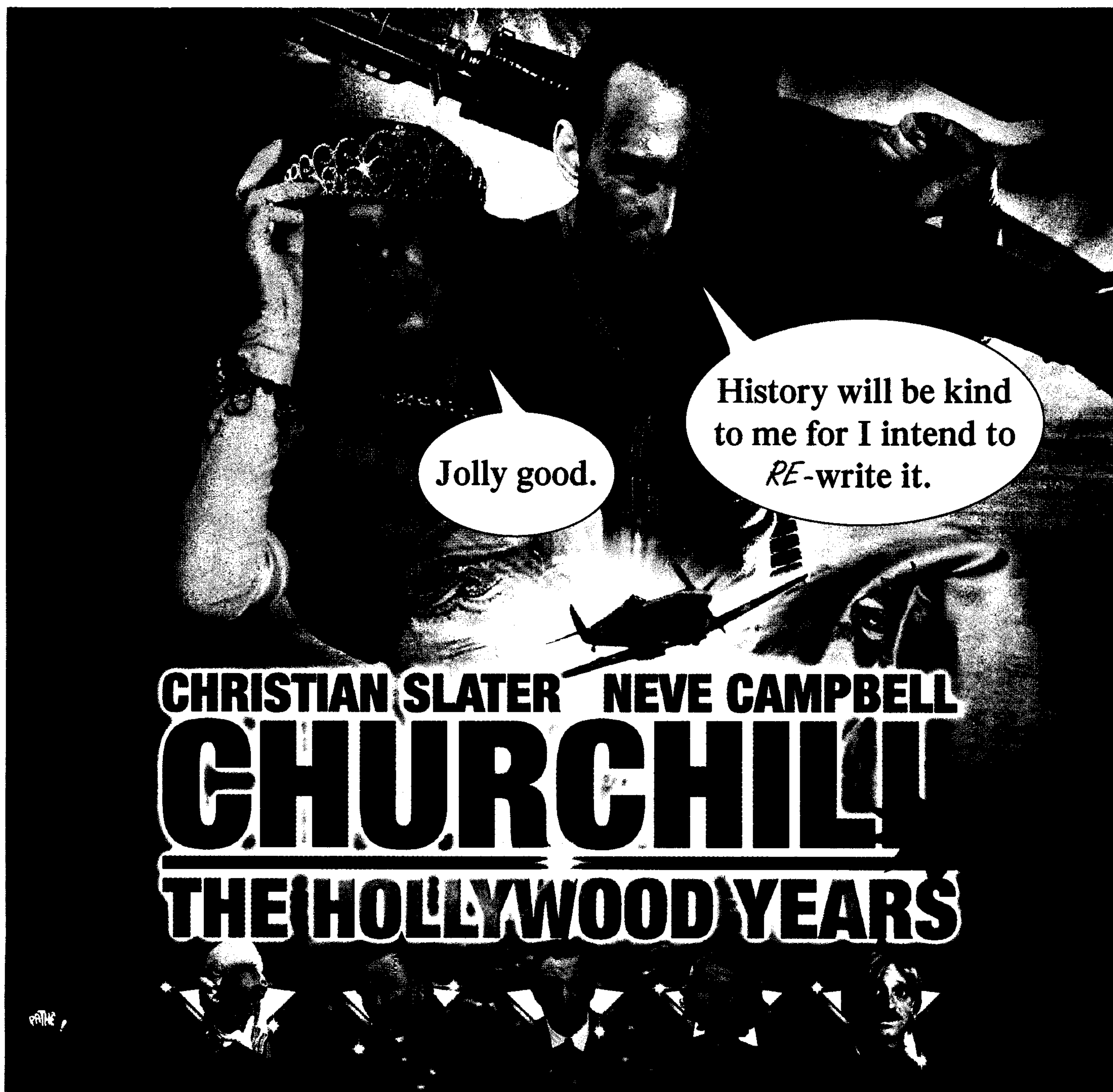


HUSBAND



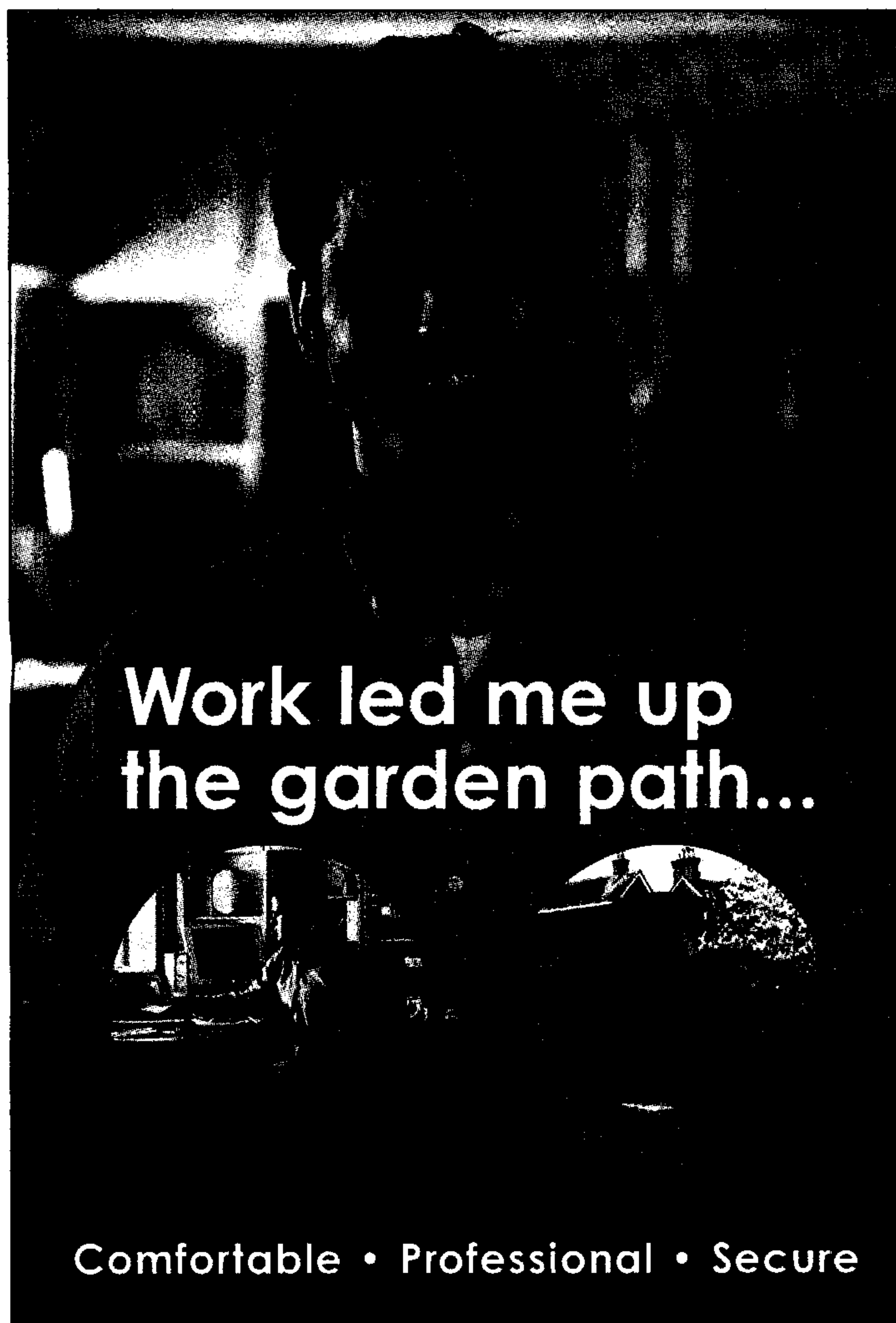


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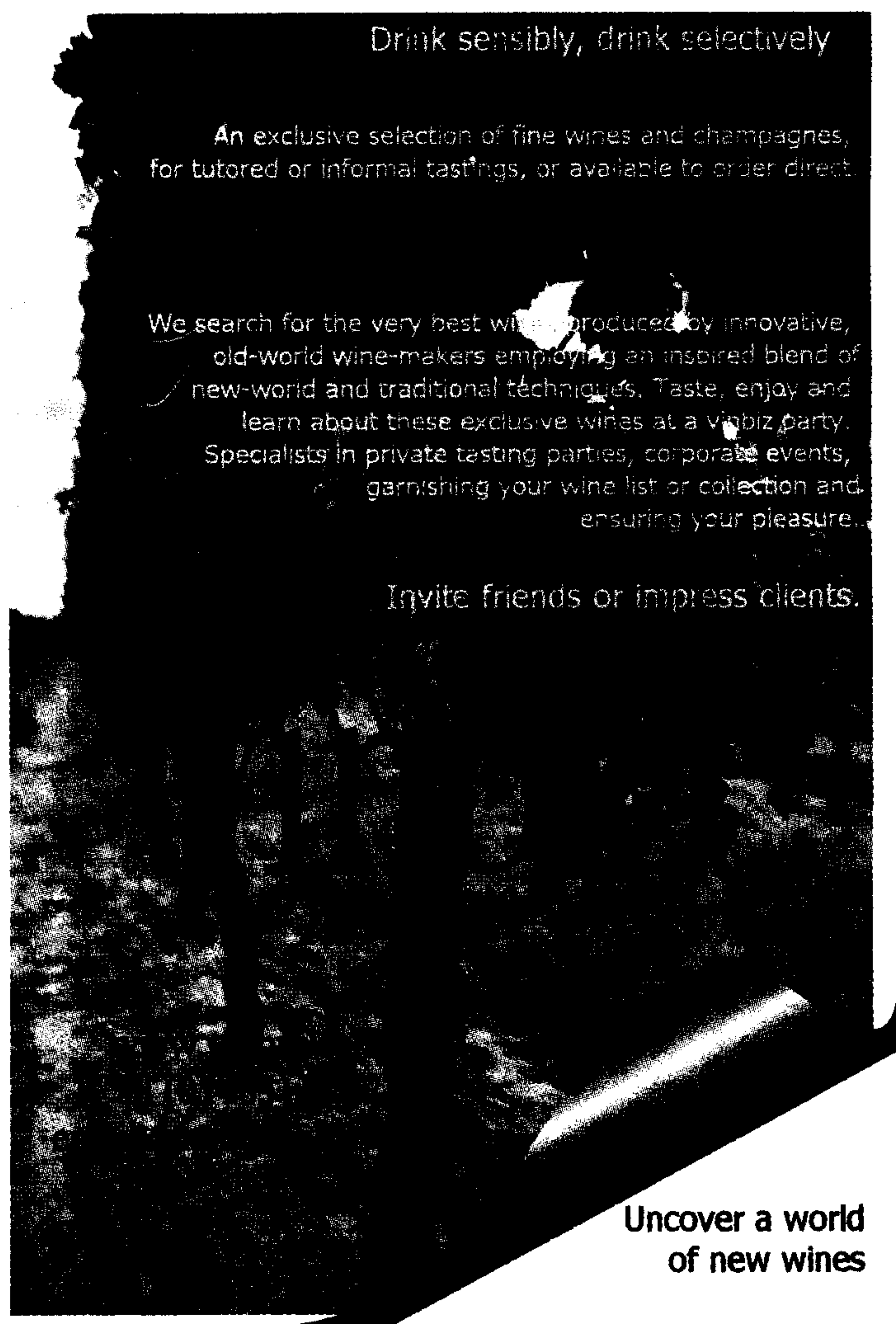
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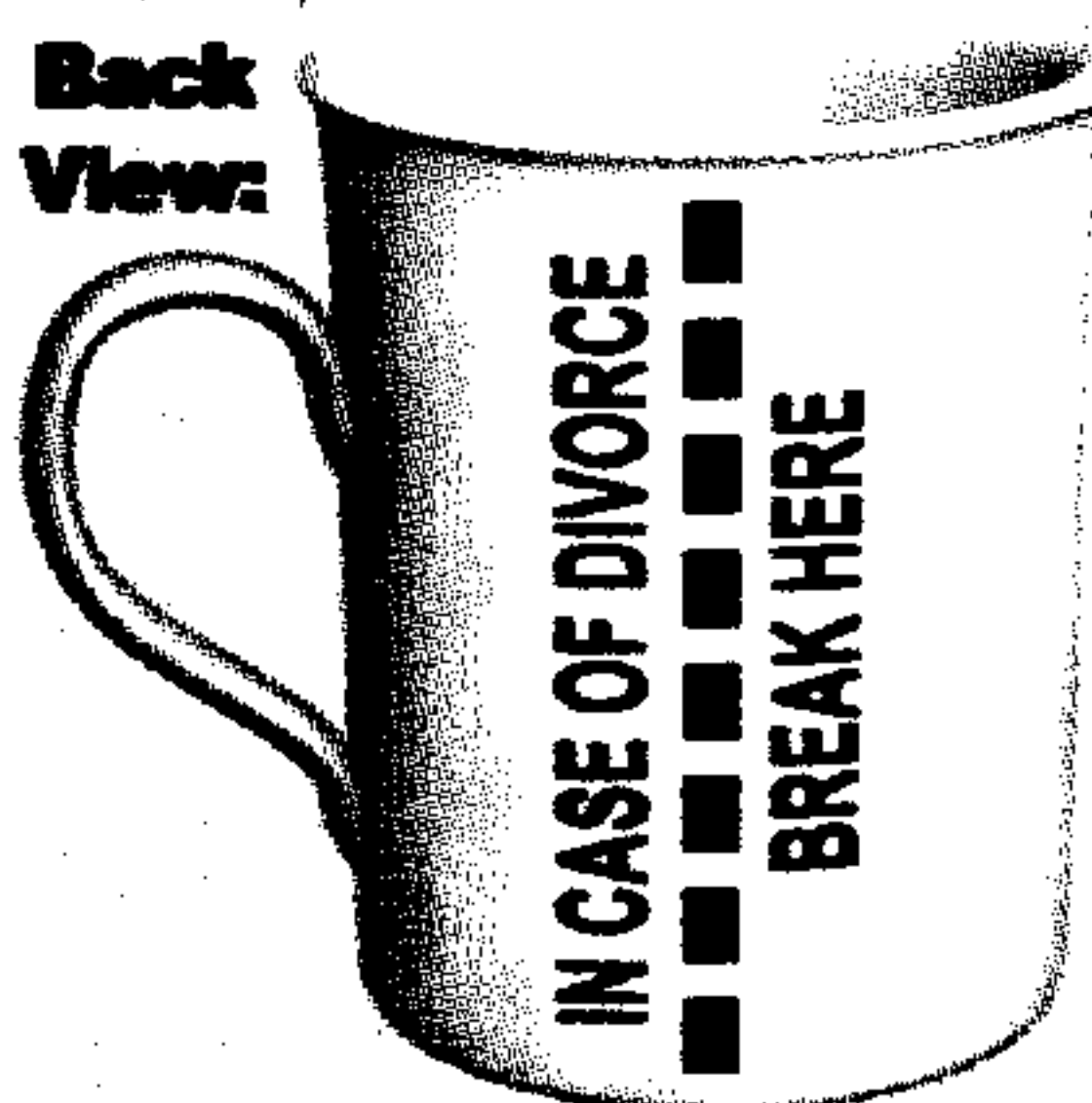
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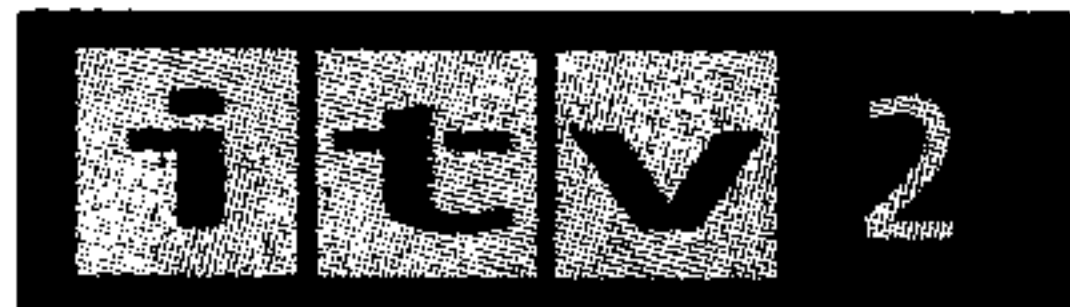
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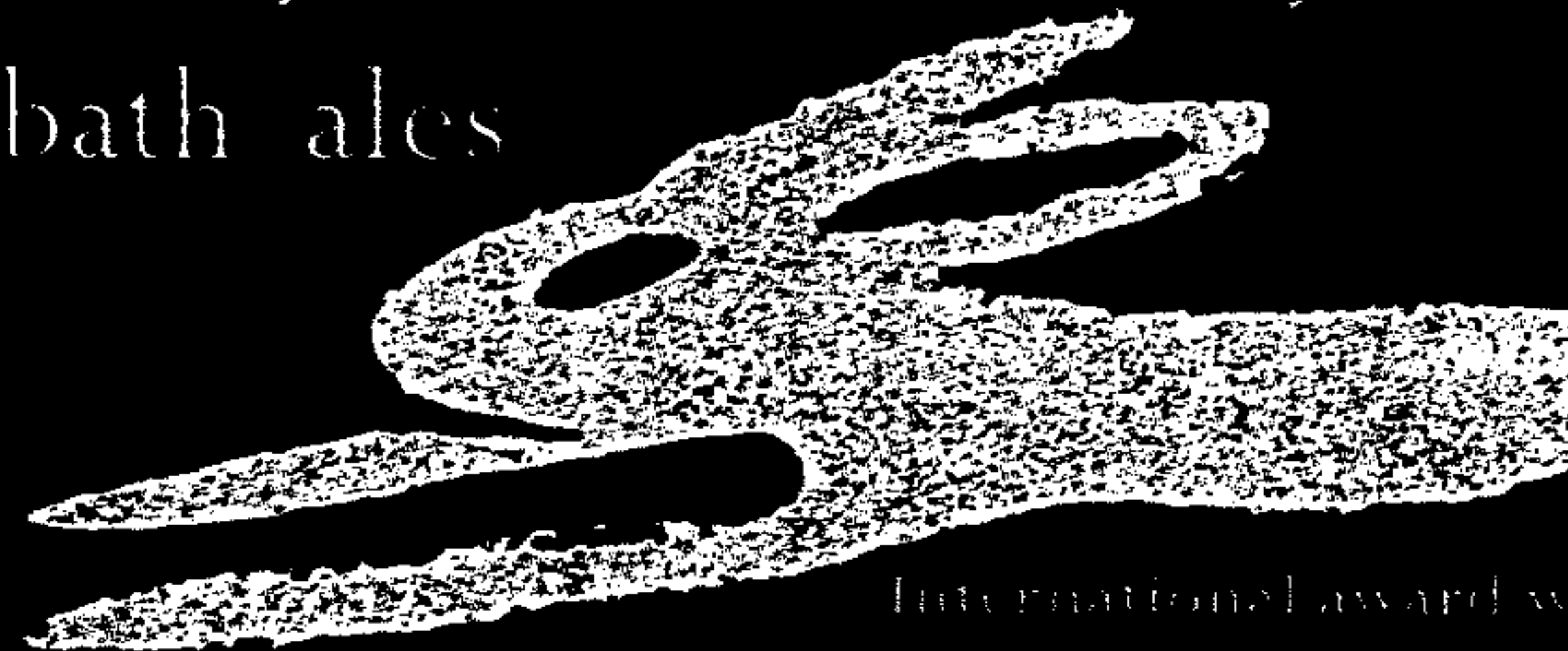
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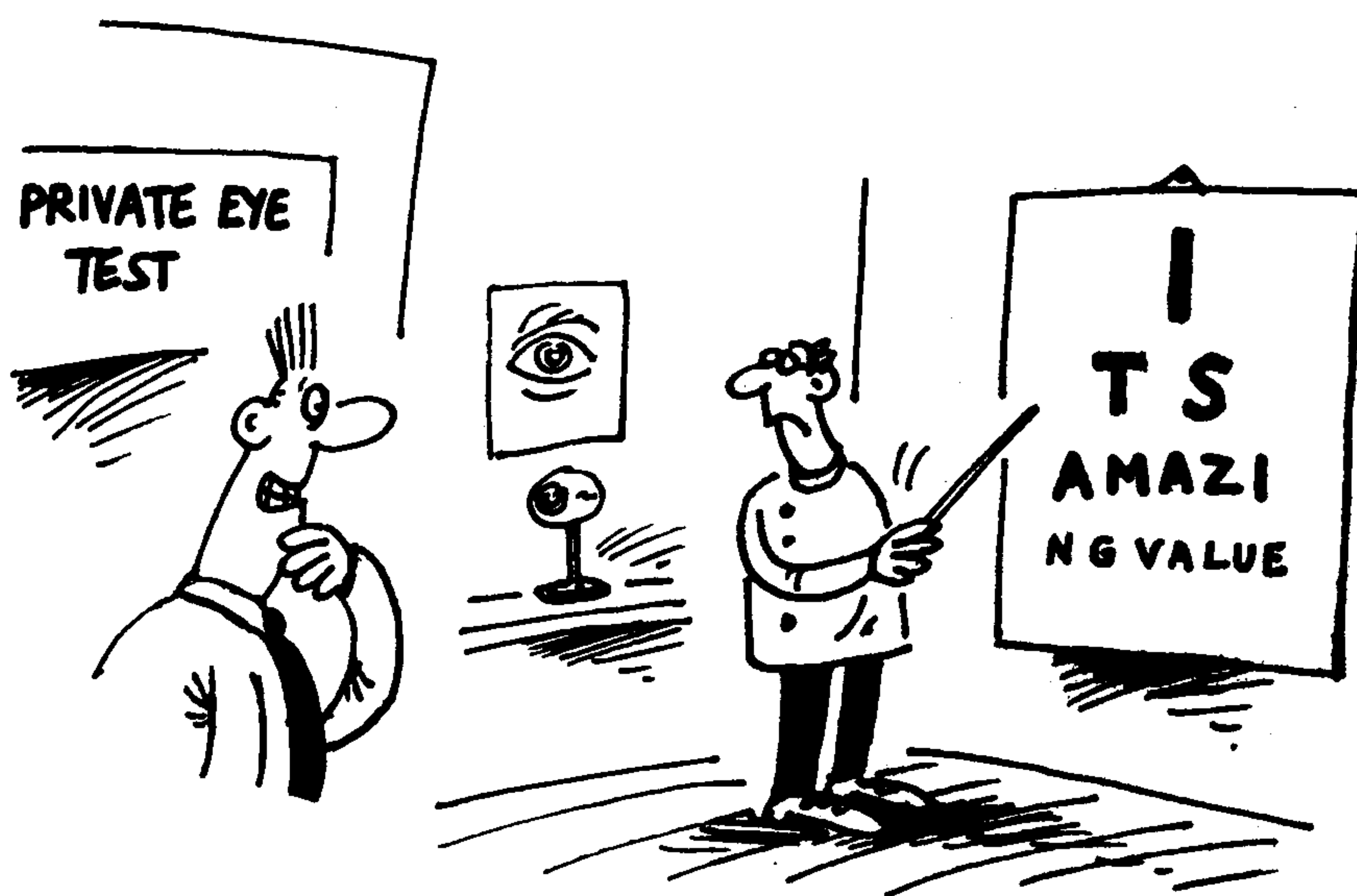
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